

Zechariah

New American Standard Bible (Updated 1995)
with endnotes and some changes and suggested changes

Part 1 (Chapters 1-8)

I. Date, Author's Name, and Call to Repentance for the People in Jerusalem (1:1-6)

Zech. 1:1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying,¹ **2** “Yahweh was very angry with your fathers.”² **3** Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “Return to Me,” declares Yahweh of hosts, “that I may return to you,” says Yahweh of hosts.’³ **4** “Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “Return [Turn] now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.’” “But they did not listen or give heed to Me,” declares Yahweh.⁴ **5** “Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?”⁵ **6** But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers?””

Then they repented and said, “As Yahweh of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us.”⁶

II. Eight Night Visions (1:7-6:8)

A. First Vision – The Horsemen Among the Myrtle Trees (1:7-17)

Zech. 1:7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, as follows:⁷ **8** I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on a red horse, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, with red, sorrel and white horses behind him.⁸ **9** Then I said, “My lord, what are these?” And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “I will show you what these are.”⁹ **10** And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, “These are those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol the earth.”¹⁰ **11** So they answered the angel of Yahweh who was standing among the myrtle trees and said, “We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet.”¹¹

Zech. 1:12 Then the angel of Yahweh said, “Yahweh of hosts, how long will You have no compassion for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant these seventy years?”¹² **13** Yahweh answered the angel who was speaking with me with good words, comforting words.¹³ **14** So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “Proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion.”¹⁴ **15** “And I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was angry for only a little while, they furthered the disaster [joined in the evil].”¹⁵ **16** ‘Therefore thus says Yahweh, “I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it,” declares Yahweh of hosts, “and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.””¹⁶ **17** “Again, proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and Yahweh will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.””¹⁷

B. Second Vision – Four Horns and Four Craftsmen (1:18-21)

Zech. 1:18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there were four horns.¹⁸ **19** So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these?” And he answered me, “These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.”¹⁹ **20** Then Yahweh showed me four craftsmen.²⁰ **21** I said, “What are these coming to do?” And he said, “These are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head; but these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it.”²¹

C. Third Vision – The Surveyor Foreshadows Israel's Glorious Future (2:1-13)

Zech. 2:1 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a man with a measuring line in his hand.²² **2** So I said, “Where are you going?” And he said to me, “To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is.”²³ **3** And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him,²⁴ **4** and said to him, “Run, speak to that young man, saying, ‘Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it.’²⁵ **5** ‘For I,’ declares Yahweh, ‘will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’”²⁶

Zech. 2:6 “Ho there! Flee from the land of the north,” declares Yahweh, “for I have dispersed you as the four winds of the heavens,” declares Yahweh.²⁷ **7** “Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon,”²⁸ **8** for thus says Yahweh of hosts.

(“After glory He has sent Me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple [pupil] of His eye.²⁹ **9** “For behold, I will wave My hand over them so that they will be plunder for their slaves. Then you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent Me.”³⁰)

10 “Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” declares Yahweh.³¹

11 (“Many nations will join themselves to Yahweh in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent Me to you.”³² **12** “Yahweh will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”³³

Zech. 2:13 “Be silent, all flesh, before Yahweh; for He is aroused from His holy habitation.”)

D. Fourth Vision – The Cleansing and Restoration of Israel (3:1-10)

Zech. 3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Yahweh, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.³⁴ **2** Yahweh said to Satan, “Yahweh rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, Yahweh who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”³⁵

Zech. 3:3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel.³⁶ **4** He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.”³⁷ **5** Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of Yahweh was standing by.³⁸

Zech. 3:6 And the angel of Yahweh admonished Joshua, saying, **7** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘If you will walk in My ways and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing here.’³⁹ **8** ‘Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you — indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.’⁴⁰ **9** ‘For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.’⁴¹ **10** ‘In that day,’ declares Yahweh of hosts, ‘every one of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and under his fig tree.’”⁴²

E. Fifth Vision – The Gold Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees (4:1-14)

Zech. 4:1 Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep. **2** He said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it;”⁴³ **3** also two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side.”⁴⁴ **4** Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, “What are these, my

lord?”⁴⁵ **5** So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.” **6** Then he said to me, “This is the word of Yahweh to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says Yahweh of hosts. **7** ‘What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!”’⁴⁶

(**Zech. 4:8** Also the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,⁴⁷ **9** “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you.⁴⁸ **10** “For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven [they] will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel — these [seven] are the eyes of Yahweh which range to and fro throughout the earth.”⁴⁹)

Zech. 4:11 Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?” **12** And I answered the second time and said to him, “What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?”⁵⁰ **13** So he answered me, saying, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.” **14** Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”⁵¹

F. Sixth Vision – The Flying Scroll [Sickle] (5:1-4)

Zech. 5:1 Then I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, there was a flying scroll [sickle].⁵² **2** And he said to me, “What do you see?” And I answered, “I see a flying scroll [sickle]; its length is twenty cubits [30’] and its width ten cubits [15’].” **3** Then he said to me, “This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the whole land; surely everyone who steals will be purged away [to death] according to the writing on one side [this], and everyone who swears will be purged away [to death] according to the writing on the other side [this].⁵³ **4** “I will make it go forth,” declares Yahweh of hosts, “and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones.”⁵⁴

G. Seventh Vision – The Woman in the Basket (5:5-11)

Zech. 5:5 Then the angel who was speaking with me went out and said to me, “Lift up now your eyes and see what this is going forth.” **6** I said, “What is it?” And he said, “This is the ephah [measuring basket] going forth.” Again he said, “This is their appearance in all the land⁵⁵ **7** (and behold, a lead cover was lifted up); and this is a woman sitting inside the ephah.” **8** Then he said, “This is Wickedness!” And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening.⁵⁶ **9** Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there two women were coming out with the wind in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens. **10** I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “Where are they taking the ephah?” **11** Then he said to me, “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal.”⁵⁷

H. Eighth Vision – The Four Chariots (6:1-8)

Zech. 6:1 Now I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming forth from between the two mountains; and the mountains were bronze mountains.⁵⁸ **2** With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, **3** with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot strong dappled horses. **4** Then I spoke and said to the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these, my lord?” **5** The angel replied to me, “These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth, **6** with one of which the black horses are going forth to the north country; and the white ones go forth after them, while the dappled ones go forth to the south country⁵⁹. **7** “When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth.”⁶⁰ And He said, “Go, patrol the earth.” So they patrolled the earth. **8** Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, “See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the north.”

III. The Symbolic Crowning of Joshua the High Priest (6:9-15)

Zech. 6:9 The word of Yahweh also came to me, saying, **10** “Take an offering from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah; and you go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, where they have arrived from Babylon.⁶¹ **11** “Take silver and gold, make an ornate crown and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.⁶² **12** “Then say to him, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for he will branch out from where he is [underneath it/him]; and he will build the temple of Yahweh.⁶³ **13** “Yes, it is he who will build the temple of Yahweh, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on his throne. Thus, he will be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.”⁶⁴ **14** “Now the crown will become a reminder in the temple of Yahweh to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen the son of Zephaniah. **15** “Those who are far off will come and build the temple of Yahweh. Then you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you. And it will take place if you completely obey Yahweh your God.”⁶⁵

IV. The Problem of Fasting and the Promise of the Future (7:1-8:23)

A. The Question by the Delegation From Bethel (7:1-3)

Zech. 7:1 In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev.⁶⁶ **2** Now the town of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to seek the favor of Yahweh,⁶⁷ **3** speaking to the priests who belong to the house of Yahweh of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, “Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?”⁶⁸

B. The Rebuke of the Jews by Yahweh (7:4-7)

Zech. 7:4 Then the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying, **5** “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted?’⁶⁹ **6** ‘When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves?’ **7** ‘Are not these the words which Yahweh proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous along with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?’⁷⁰

C. The Command for the Jews to Repent (7:8-14)

Zech. 7:8 Then the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah saying, **9** “Thus has Yahweh of hosts said, ‘Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; **10** and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.’⁷¹ **11** “But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing. **12** “They made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law [instruction, Torah] and the words which Yahweh of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from Yahweh of hosts.⁷² **13** “And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,” says Yahweh of hosts;⁷³ **14** “but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.”⁷⁴

D. The Restoration of Israel to God’s Favor (8:1-17)

Zech. 8:1 Then the word of Yahweh of hosts came, saying, **2** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.’⁷⁵ **3** “Thus says Yahweh, ‘I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of Yahweh of hosts will be called the Holy Mountain.’⁷⁶ **4** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of age.’⁷⁷ **5** ‘And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets.’⁷⁸ **6** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?’ declares Yahweh of hosts.⁷⁹ **7** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts,

‘Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west;⁸⁰ 8 and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.’⁸¹

Zech. 8:9 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, those who spoke in the day that the foundation of the house of Yahweh of hosts was laid, to the end that the temple might be built.’⁸² **10** ‘For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another.’⁸³ **11** ‘But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.⁸⁴ **12** ‘For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.’⁸⁵ **13** ‘It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’⁸⁶

Zech. 8:14 “For thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘Just as I purposed to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,’ says Yahweh of hosts, ‘and I have not relented,’⁸⁷ **15** so I have again purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear!’⁸⁸

Zech. 8:16 ‘These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates.’⁸⁹ **17** ‘Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,’ declares Yahweh.’⁹⁰

E. Kingdom Joy and Jewish Favor (8:18-23)

Zech. 8:18 Then the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying, **19** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.’⁹¹

Zech. 8:20 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘It will yet be that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities.’⁹² **21** ‘The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, “Let us go at once to entreat the favor of Yahweh, and to seek Yahweh of hosts; I will also go.”’⁹³ **22** ‘So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek Yahweh of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of Yahweh.’⁹⁴ **23** “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”’⁹⁵

Part 2 (Chapters 9-14)

V. Two Divine Prophecies: The Great Messianic Future and the Full Realization of God’s Rule (9:1-14:21)

A. The First Divine Prophecy: The Arrival and Rejection of the Messiah (9:1-11:17)

1. The Arrival of the Messianic King (9:1-10:12)

a. The Destruction of the Gentiles and the Preservation of Israel (9:1-8)

Zech. 9:1 The burden of the word of Yahweh is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward Yahweh),⁹⁶

- 2 And Hamath also, which borders on it;
Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.
- 3 For Tyre built herself a fortress
And piled up silver like dust,
And gold like the mire of the streets.
- 4 Behold, the Lord will dispossess her
And cast her wealth into the sea;
And she will be consumed with fire.⁹⁷

- 5 Ashkelon will see it and be afraid.
 Gaza too will writhe in great pain;
 Also Ekron, for her expectation has been confounded.
 Moreover, the king will perish from Gaza,
 And Ashkelon will not be inhabited.
- 6 And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod,
 And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
- 7 And I will remove their blood from their mouth
 And their detestable things from between their teeth.
 Then they also will be a remnant for our God,
 And be like a clan [chief, leader] in Judah,
 And Ekron like a Jebusite.⁹⁸

Zech. 9:8 But I will camp around My house because of an army,
 Because of him who passes by and returns;
 And no oppressor will pass over them anymore,
 For now I have seen with My eyes.⁹⁹

b. The Arrival of Israel's King (9:9-10)

- Zech. 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
 Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem!
 Behold, your king is coming to you;
 He is just [righteous] and endowed with salvation,
 Humble, and mounted on a donkey,
 Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.¹⁰⁰
- 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
 And the horse from Jerusalem;
 And the bow of war will be cut off.
 And He will speak peace to the nations;
 And His dominion will be from sea to sea,
 And from the River to the ends of the earth.¹⁰¹

c. The Deliverance and Blessing of Israel's People (9:11-10:1)

- Zech. 9:11** As for you also, because of the blood of My covenant with you,
 I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.¹⁰²
- 12 Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope;
 This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you.
- 13 For I will bend Judah as My bow,
 I will fill the bow with Ephraim.
 And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece;
 And I will make you like a warrior's sword.¹⁰³
- 14 Then Yahweh will appear over them,
 And His arrow will go forth like lightning;
 And the Lord Yahweh will blow the trumpet,
 And will march in the storm winds of the south.¹⁰⁴
- 15 Yahweh of hosts will defend them.
 And they will devour and trample on the sling stones;
 And they will drink and be boisterous as with wine;
 And they will be filled like a sacrificial basin,
 Drenched like the corners of the altar.¹⁰⁵
- 16 And Yahweh their God will save them in that day

- As the flock of His people;
 For they are as the stones of a crown,
 Sparkling in His land.¹⁰⁶
- 17 For what comeliness and beauty will be theirs!
 Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.¹⁰⁷
- 10:1 Ask rain from Yahweh at the time of the spring rain —
 Yahweh who makes the storm clouds;
 And He will give them showers of rain, vegetation in the field to each man.¹⁰⁸

d. Warning and Encouragement to Israel (10:2-4)

- Zech. 10:2** For the teraphim speak iniquity,
 And the diviners see lying visions
 And tell false dreams;
 They comfort in vain.
 Therefore the people wander like sheep,
 They are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.¹⁰⁹
- 3 “My anger is kindled against the shepherds,
 And I will punish the male goats;
 For Yahweh of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah,
 And will make them like His majestic horse in battle.¹¹⁰
- 4 “From them [him] will come the cornerstone,
 From them [him] the tent peg,
 From them [him] the bow of battle,
 From them [him] every ruler, all of them together.¹¹¹

e. Israel’s Victory Over Her Enemies (10:5-7)

- Zech. 10:5** “They will be as mighty men,
 Treading down the enemy in the mire of the streets in battle;
 And they will fight, for Yahweh will be with them;
 And the riders on horses will be put to shame.¹¹²
- 6 “I will strengthen the house of Judah,
 And I will save the house of Joseph,
 And I will bring them back,
 Because I have had compassion on them;
 And they will be as though I had not rejected them,
 For I am Yahweh their God and I will answer them.
- 7 “Ephraim will be like a mighty man,
 And their heart will be glad as if from wine;
 Indeed, their children will see it and be glad,
 Their heart will rejoice in Yahweh.¹¹³

f. Israel’s Complete Deliverance and Restoration (10:8-12)

- Zech. 10:8** “I will whistle for them to gather them together,
 For I have redeemed them;
 And they will be as numerous as they were before.¹¹⁴
- 9 “When I scatter them among the peoples,
 They will remember Me in far countries,
 And they with their children will live and come back.¹¹⁵
- 10 “I will bring them back from the land of Egypt
 And gather them from Assyria;
 And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon

- Until no room can be found for them.¹¹⁶
- 11 “And they will pass through the sea of distress
And He will strike the waves in the sea,
So that all the depths of the Nile will dry up;
And the pride of Assyria will be brought down
And the scepter of Egypt will depart.¹¹⁷
- 12 “And I will strengthen them in Yahweh,
And in His name they will walk,” declares Yahweh.¹¹⁸

2. The Rejection of the Messianic Shepherd-King (11:1-17)

a. Prologue (11:1-3)

- Zech. 11:1** Open your doors, O Lebanon,
That a fire may feed on your cedars.
- 2 Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
Because the glorious trees have been destroyed;
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,
For the impenetrable forest has come down.
- 3 There is a sound of the shepherds’ wail,
For their glory is ruined;
There is a sound of the young lions’ roar,
For the pride of the Jordan is ruined.¹¹⁹

b. Prophecy of the Rejection of the Good Shepherd (11:4-14)

Zech. 11:4 Thus says Yahweh my God, “Pasture the flock doomed to slaughter.¹²⁰ 5 “Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and each of those who sell them says, ‘Blessed be Yahweh, for I have become rich!’ And their own shepherds have no pity on them.¹²¹

Zech. 11:6 “For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land,” declares Yahweh; “but behold, I will cause the men to fall, each into another’s power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I will not deliver them from their power.”¹²²

Zech. 11:7 So I pastured the flock doomed to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock.¹²³ And I took for myself two staves: the one I called Favor [Beauty] and the other I called Union [Harmony, Allotment]; so I pastured the flock.¹²⁴ 8 Then I annihilated the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me.¹²⁵ 9 Then I said, “I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another’s flesh.”¹²⁶

Zech 11:10 I took my staff Favor [Beauty] and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples.¹²⁷ 11 So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of Yahweh.¹²⁸ 12 I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages.¹²⁹ 13 Then Yahweh said to me, “Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of Yahweh.¹³⁰ 14 Then I cut in pieces my second staff Union [Harmony, Allotment], to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.¹³¹

c. The Worthless Shepherd (11:15-17)

Zech. 11:15 Yahweh said to me, “Take again for yourself the equipment of a foolish shepherd.¹³² 16 “For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the

scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs.

17 “Woe to the worthless shepherd
Who leaves the flock!
A sword will be on his arm
And on his right eye!
His arm will be totally withered
And his right eye will be blind.”¹³³

B. The Second Divine Prophecy: The Arrival and Reception of the Messiah (12:1-14:21)

1. The Deliverance and Conversion of Israel (12:1-13:9)

a. The Siege of Jerusalem (12:1-3)

Zech. 12:1 The burden of the word of Yahweh concerning Israel.¹³⁴

Thus declares Yahweh who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him,¹³⁵ 2 “Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah.¹³⁶ 3 “It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.¹³⁷

b. Israel’s Complete Deliverance From Her Earthly Enemies (12:4-9)

Zech. 12:4 “In that day,” declares Yahweh, “I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.¹³⁸ 5 “Then the clans [chiefs, leaders] of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through Yahweh of hosts, their God.’¹³⁹

Zech. 12:6 “In that day I will make the clans [chiefs, leaders] of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.¹⁴⁰ 7 “Yahweh also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah.¹⁴¹ 8 “In that day Yahweh will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of Yahweh before them.¹⁴² 9 “And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.¹⁴³

c. Israel’s Complete Deliverance From Sin (12:10-13:6)

Zech. 12:10 “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.¹⁴⁴ 11 “In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.¹⁴⁵ 12 “The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves;¹⁴⁶ 13 the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; 14 all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.¹⁴⁷

Zech. 13:1 “In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.¹⁴⁸

Zech. 13:2 “It will come about in that day,” declares Yahweh of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the

unclean spirit from the land.¹⁴⁹ 3 “And if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, ‘You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of Yahweh’; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies.¹⁵⁰ 4 “Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive; 5 but he will say, ‘I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth.’ 6 “And one will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will say, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’¹⁵¹

2. The Messiah’s First and Second Appearances and His Kingdom (13:7-14:21)

a. The Great Shepherd’s Death and the Scattering and Salvation of Israel (13:7-9)

Zech. 13:7 “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
And against the man, My Associate [the man of My community],”
Declares Yahweh of hosts.
“Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered;
And I will turn My hand against the little ones.¹⁵²
8 “It will come about in all the land,”
Declares Yahweh,
“That two parts in it will be cut off and perish;
But the third will be left in it.¹⁵³
9 “And I will bring the third part through the fire,
Refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them;
I will say, ‘They are My people,’
And they will say, ‘Yahweh is my God.’”¹⁵⁴

b. The Siege of Jerusalem (14:1-2)

Zech. 14:1 Behold, a day is coming for Yahweh when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.¹⁵⁵ 2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.¹⁵⁶

c. The Signs of the Messiah’s Return (14:3-8)

Zech. 14:3 Then Yahweh will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.¹⁵⁷ 4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.¹⁵⁸ 5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then Yahweh, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!¹⁵⁹

Zech. 14:6 In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. 7 For it will be a unique day which is known to Yahweh, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.¹⁶⁰

Zech. 14:8 And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.¹⁶¹

d. The Establishment of God’s Kingdom Through the Messiah (14:9-11)

Zech. 14:9 And Yahweh will be king over all the earth; in that day Yahweh will be the only one [Yahweh will be one], and His name the only one [and His name one].¹⁶²

Zech. 14:10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses.¹⁶³ **11** People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.¹⁶⁴

e. The Punishment of Israel's Enemies (14:12-15)

Zech. 14:12 Now this will be the plague with which Yahweh will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.¹⁶⁵ **13** It will come about in that day that a great panic from Yahweh will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.¹⁶⁶ **14** Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance.¹⁶⁷ **15** So also like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps.¹⁶⁸

f. The Universal Worship of God the King and His Messiah (14:16-19)

Zech. 14:16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, Yahweh of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths.¹⁶⁹ **17** And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, Yahweh of hosts, there will be no rain on them.¹⁷⁰ **18** If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which Yahweh smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.¹⁷¹ **19** This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.¹⁷²

g. "HOLY TO THE LORD" (14:20-21)

Zech. 14:20 In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in Yahweh's house will be like the bowls before the altar.¹⁷³ **21** Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to Yahweh of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of Yahweh of hosts in that day.¹⁷⁴

¹ EBC – **Historical background** – Zechariah’s prophetic ministry took place in the time of Israel’s restoration from the Babylonian captivity, i.e., in the postexilic period. Approximately seventy-five years had elapsed since Habakkuk and Jeremiah had predicted the invasion of Judah by the Neo-Babylonian army of King Nebuchadnezzar. When their “hard service” (Isa 40:2) in Babylonia was completed, God influenced Cyrus, the Persian king, to allow the Hebrews to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple (Isa 44:28)

The historical circumstances and conditions Zechariah ministered under were, in general, those of Haggai’s time, since their labors were contemporary (cf. 1:1 with Hag 1:1). In 520 B.C. Haggai preached four sermons in four months. Zechariah began his ministry two months after Haggai had begun his. Thus the immediate historical background for Zechariah’s ministry began with Cyrus’s capture of Babylon and included the completion of the restoration, or second, temple. Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 B.C. Cyrus then signed the edict that permitted Israel to return and rebuild her temple (2 Chronicles 36:21-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:3, 5). According to Ezra 2, a large group (about fifty thousand) did return in 538–537 B.C. under the civil leadership of Zerubbabel (the governor) and the religious leadership of Joshua (the high priest). This group completed the foundation of the temple early in 536 B.C. (Ezra 3:8-13). But several obstacles arose that slowed and finally halted the construction (Ezra 4:1-5, 24). During the years of inactivity, Cyrus died in battle (529 B.C.); and his son Cambyses II, who was coregent with Cyrus for one year, reigned (530–522 B.C.)

Political rebellion ultimately brought Darius Hystaspes to the throne in 522 B.C. (The Behistun Inscription pictures him putting down an insurrection.) His wise administration and religious toleration created a favorable climate for the Israelites to complete the rebuilding of their temple. He confirmed the decree of Cyrus and authorized resumption of the work (Ezra 6:6-12; Hag 1:1-2). The construction was resumed in 520 B.C., and the temple was finished in 516 B.C. For additional events in the history of the period, see the historical background of Ezra, Daniel, and Haggai

Dates of Zechariah’s prophecies in conjunction with Haggai’s –

1. Haggai’s first message (Hag 1:1-11; Ezra 5:1)—29 August 520 B.C.
2. Resumption of the building of the temple (Hag 1:12-15; Ezra 5:2)—21 September 520 (The rebuilding seems to have been hindered from 536 to about 530 [Ezra 4:1-5], and the work ceased altogether from about 530 to 520 [Ezra 4:24].)
3. Haggai’s second message (Hag 2:1-9)—17 October 520
4. Beginning of Zechariah’s preaching (Zech 1:1-6)—October/November 520
5. Haggai’s third message (Hag 2:10-19)—18 December 520
6. Haggai’s fourth message (Hag 2:20-23)—18 December 520
7. Tattenai’s letter to Darius concerning the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 5:3-6:14)—519–518 (There must have been a lapse of time between the resumption of the building and Tattenai’s appearance.)
8. Zechariah’s eight night visions (Zech 1:7-6:8)—15 February 519
9. Joshua’s crowning (Zech 6:9-15)—16(?) February 519
10. Urging of repentance, promise of blessings (Zech 7-8)—7 December 518
11. Dedication of the temple (Ezra 6:15-18)—12 March 516
12. Zechariah’s final prophecy (Zech 9-14)—after 480(?) – maybe into the reign of Artaxerxes I (465–424 B.C.)

Structure of the book – While Zechariah may be divided into two parts (chs. 1-8 and chs. 9-14), it likewise falls rather naturally into five major divisions: (1) 1:1-6, introduction and call to repentance; (2) 1:7-6:8+ eight night visions; (3) 6:9-15, the symbolic crowning of Joshua the high priest; (4) chapters 7-8, the question about fasting; and (5) chapters 9-14, two prophetic oracles (9-11 and 12-14).

The theme of the book – The central theme of Zechariah is encouragement—primarily encouragement to complete the rebuilding of the temple. In fact, Laetseh (p. 403) calls Zechariah “the prophet of hope and encouragement in troublous times.” Various means are used to accomplish this end, and these function as subthemes. For example, great stress is laid on the coming of the Messiah and his overthrow of all anti-kingdom forces so that the theocracy can be finally and fully established on earth. The consideration of the current local scene thus becomes the basis for the eschatological, universal picture.

Zechariah (זְכַרְיָהּ) = Yahweh remembers

Berekiah (בְּרֵכִיָּהּ) = Yahweh blesses

Iddo (יְדוּ) = short for יְדוּיָהּ, which means Yahweh adorns (the bearer of the name); Commentary on Ezra says it means “strength”

The eighth month of Darius’s second year was October-November 520 B.C. According to Haggai 1:1, Haggai also began his prophetic ministry in the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, i.e., on 29 August 520 B.C. (For a synchronization of the old lunar calendar with Julian-Gregorian calendar dates, see Baldwin, Zechariah, p. 29; also Parker and Duhherstein.)

וְיַהְוָה יְבִרְךָ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹגוֹס קִרְיֹוֹס = the message of Yahweh through his spokesman and prophet Zechariah to the people in Jerusalem.

² “Your” is plural. God is speaking directly to Zechariah, but he is referring to him along with the 50,000 or so exiles who have returned from exile in Babylon. Their fathers are the previous generations, who were disobedient to God, before the Babylonian captivity. God is making the blanket statement that these Jews’ fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers were highly disobedient to God so that He was angry with them. And of course this led to God’s justice towards the nation at the hands of the Babylonians who took them into exile.

³ אֲשֶׁר וְנִשְׁחָבֵהּ as the human dynamic between Israel and Yahweh, that will finally reach its culmination when God returns and circumcises the heart of every Jew in the millennial kingdom in fulfillment of His promise to Abraham to make them the “great nation.”

God is instructing Zechariah to call the returning exiles to repentance. Why do they need this message? Are they not assumed to have repented so that they now can return to Israel? Yes, but God is exhorting them to remain repentant and never become presumptuous so that they go back to the ways of their ancestors. Cf. v. 4.

⁴ God had called these exiles’ ancestors to repentance, but they refused to do so.

⁵ The previous generations of these Jews who have returned to Jerusalem died and no longer exist, and they remained evil and unrepentant. And even the prophets who confronted them for their evil have died. (Another possibility in line with the LXX is that God is asking, “Will the prophets not live eternally, because they were men of authentic belief?” And the answer is, Yes, which is what He is encouraging the people listening to Zechariah to pursue.) Thus, all human beings cannot thwart the natural course of their existences and prevent death. Nor can they thwart God’s plans to grant eternal life to whom He wishes. No one is greater than God, who is the only source of life.

⁶ The NAS95 places the quotation marks in this paragraph so that God speaks until the end of v. 6, as if He is saying that the previous generation of exiles did eventually repent. But it makes more sense to see the latter part of the verse as a comment by Zechariah to the effect that the 50,000 or so exiles in Jerusalem heed his message and repent of their sin—as they should be doing continually. This is because God is instructing Zechariah to speak to them, and it is they who will need to remain repentant in order to avoid future actions of justice from God. Thus, these returning exiles as continuously sinful human beings respond to Zechariah with their own repentance before God. They are expressing proper humility in the face of God’s encouragement to return to Him.

The first part of the verse is God’s reminding people in Jerusalem that He always follows through on both His promises of mercy and His threats of justice when the former are accompanied by genuine repentance on the part of sinful human beings and the latter are not. (Cf. [Deuteronomy 28:20](#) “Yahweh will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me.”) The previous generations of these people failed to repent, while the current Jews take God at His word and do repent. Therefore, the “us” refers to them as Jews whose fathers and grandfathers experienced the effects of God’s threats of justice because of their unrepentant hearts. The present generation is willing to share in the sinfulness of their fathers and grandfathers.

And what will be the effect of their repentance? God will not destroy Jerusalem and the new temple—at least not during their lifetimes. Eventually, of course, the city and temple are destroyed again, but this time by the Romans in A.D. 70 because of the Jews’ lack of repentance for rejecting Jesus their Messiah.

“They repented” is a translation of נִשְׁחָבֵהּ which the LXX translates as καὶ ἀπεκρίθησαν.

⁷ EBC – The setting is the time of Darius, and the date is 15 February 519 B.C., about three months after the call to repentance (cf. 1:1). On this same day (24 Shebat), five months earlier, the rebuilding of the temple had been resumed (cf. Hag 1:14-15; see also 2:10, 18, 20). It was evidently a day in which God had special delight because of the obedience of his people.

Feinberg (in EBC) – The series of visions carry us through God’s dealings with Israel from the time of their chastisement by God under the Gentile powers until they are restored to their land with their rebuilt city and temple under their Messiah King. The first vision gives the general theme of the whole series; the others add the details ... When the world was busy with its own affairs, God’s eyes and the heart of the Messiah were upon the lowly estate of Israel and upon the temple in Jerusalem.

⁸ [Nehemiah 8:15](#) So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of other leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written.”

[Isaiah 41:19](#) “I will put the cedar in the wilderness, the acacia and the myrtle and the olive tree; I will place the juniper in the desert together with the box tree and the cypress.”

[Isaiah 55:13](#) “Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, and it will be a memorial to Yahweh, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off.”

The myrtle tree in the above passages is associated with the messianic kingdom. Perhaps here too in Zechariah, but maybe not, because these men on their horses are simply patrolling the earth.

The color of the horses is similar to the four horses of Revelation 6—white, red, black, and ashen, as well as to the horses of Jesus and his armies in Revelation 19—white. But is there a direct correlation? Probably not, because these men are simply patrolling the earth.

There is the “man” on the red horse, and from the rest of the vision, the other horses have men on them too. These are those who are patrolling the earth and reporting back to the man on the red horse.

⁹ It can seem in vs. 9 & 10 that these are two different persons, i.e., the angel who is speaking to Zechariah and the man on the red horse, who answers his question in v. 10. This seems the most reasonable way to understand the language. Thus, the man on the red horse is the angel of Yahweh who will inform Zechariah as to the identity and role of the other horsemen and is in charge of them as they patrol the earth. And this is a vision, i.e., a dream.

So Zechariah addresses one “angel” (messenger) and the man on the white horse, another “angel” (the angelos of Yahweh), says that he will answer his question as to the identity and role of the other horsemen.

¹⁰ The other horsemen have been sent by God to observe the nations surrounding Israel. This is to say that the “earth” here is the Middle East at the time of Zechariah, not necessarily the entire globe.

יְרַחֵם יְהוָה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְאָכָיו לְפָנָיו וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל־יְדָיִן וְיִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְאָכָיו לְפָנָיו וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל־יְדָיִן = Yahweh has sent to patrol the earth/land; ἐξάπεσταλκεν κύριος τοῦ περιοδεῦσαι τὴν γῆν = lord sent to travel around the earth/land. Cf. Zechariah 6:7.

¹¹ The other horsemen respond to the *angelos* of Yahweh on the white horse. Is this a positive or negative report as far as God is concerned?

EBC – Such a description of the Persian Empire is confirmed by the inscription and bas-relief that Darius had incised on a rock at Behistun (or Bisitun), 328 feet above the highway connecting Ecbatana and Babylon. The bas-relief portrays the surrender of those who had rebelled against the king, while the inscription tells in Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian the story of the political unrest in Persia during the first two years of Darius's reign, praising his feats of valor. Darius boasted that in nineteen battles he had defeated nine rebel leaders and had subdued all his enemies. So the empire was again virtually quiet by 520 B.C. Copies of the Behistun Inscription were sent to all the nations of the empire in their own languages. A fragment of the Babylonian copy survived in Babylon, and a piece of the Aramaic text was found in the Jewish colony at Elephantine (Yeb) in Egypt (cf.

Illustrated Family Encyclopedia, 8:91). While the Persian Empire as a whole was secure and at ease by this time, the Israelites in Judah were oppressed and, of course, still under foreign domination, as the next verse makes clear.

¹² The angel of Yahweh is addressing Yahweh of hosts, which is the same as God is addressing God. It is God within the creation who is speaking to the transcendent creator as a way to communicate God's intents and purposes. Thus, God is interceding on behalf of God. Cf. **Romans 8:26** "And likewise, the Spirit also helps us in our weakness, for we do not know what is necessary to pray, but the Spirit Himself pleads for us in the manner of our wordless groanings. **8:27** And He who carefully examines the hearts knows what is the intent of the Spirit—that He pleads on behalf of those who are holy in accordance with God." And of course there is **Romans 8:34** Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also *intercedes* for us.

And this is a question, How long will God remain angry and choose not to be compassionate towards the Jews, whom He forced into captivity in Babylon and whom He made stay away from Jerusalem for 70 years?

"Have no compassion" is אֵין־רַחֲמִים (piel) and οὐ μὴ ἐλεήσης.

Cf. the first one to predict the 70 year exile of the Jews – **Jeremiah 25:11-12** 'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares Yahweh, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.

EBC – This period may be calculated from 605 B.C. (the time of the first deportation from the land) to about 536 or 535 (the time when the first returnees were settled back in the land), or from 586 (when the temple was destroyed) to 516 (when the temple was rebuilt).

The report by the horsemen that the surrounding Gentile nations were at peace must have been disappointing to Zechariah and the Jews who have suffered God's wrath and are looking forward to when He will do the same for the unbelieving nations.

Cf. **Haggai 2:6-9** "For thus says Yahweh of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. 'I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says Yahweh of hosts. 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares Yahweh of hosts. 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says Yahweh of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares Yahweh of hosts."

Cf. **Haggai 2:20-23** Then the word of Yahweh came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, "Speak to Zerubbabel governor of Judah, saying, 'I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. 'I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.' 'On that day,' declares Yahweh of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant,' declares Yahweh, 'and I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you,'" declares Yahweh of hosts.

¹³ Presumably through the angel on the white horse, God speaks to the angel who is instructing Zechariah. It is good news for the Jews! Good and comforting words – אֵין־רַחֲמִים נְהַרְמִים וְיִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְאָכָיו לְפָנָיו וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל־יְדָיִן and ῥήματα καλὰ καὶ λόγους παρακλητικού.

¹⁴ God wants Zechariah to proclaim to the Jews 1) that He sees the Jews as His very own people who should not have to answer to anyone else but Him. And yet, of course, they have been living in submission to the Babylonians and Persians now for a total of 80 or so years. The implied point is that eventually the Jews will live under only God's rule and not the Gentiles'. God wants His people neither to worship foreign gods, which they did before the Babylonian captivity, nor to live under the rule of Gentiles, which they have since the Babylonian captivity. Thus, God's jealousy covers not only the Jews' hearts but also the effects of His judgment of them that has pushed them into exile and the nations that have taken advantage of this.

¹⁵ God wants Zechariah to also communicate 2) the general sense of this verse, that God is upset and angry with the Gentile nations around Israel who have joined in the attack (LXX – συνεπιτιθέμενα and συνεπέθεντο) with Babylon and oppressed or approved of the oppression of the Jews. He was angry for only a little while (אֲזַנְיָ) (ὀλίγα) with the Jews, but the Gentiles desire to take His anger too far by annihilating them. Could God be looking into the future and seeing even worse treatment of the Jews by Gentile nations than by Assyria and Babylon? The Beast of Revelation?

But even approval without any overt action against Israel will anger God.

¹⁶ 3) that God will return (*shuv*) to Jerusalem with compassion (*rachamim*) implies that the Jews will return or have returned (*shuv*) with repentance to Him. And once again He will dwell in the city among His people because they will genuinely believe in Him and love Him. He says the same thing in 2:20 and 8:3.

The result will be that the temple will once more adorn the topography of the city and God will dwell there. It is in the process of being rebuilt, even if it is not as beautiful as Solomon's.

The measuring line implies that the city is no longer rubble, but it has buildings which are inhabited by the Jews. Here the word is מִנְיָן (or מִנְיָן) while in Zechariah 2:1 there is the phrase מִנְיָן לְמִנְיָן. The idea of measuring and using a rope or some instrument is found at least 14x in the prophets, meaning there is something substantial and significant present that allows for measuring. In this case, a city with buildings for dwelling and sustaining physical life.

These are signs of true blessing from God on the Jews that will culminate eventually in the millennial kingdom when Jesus returns.

¹⁷ 3) again, here God anticipates some point in the future, probably the far distant future of the messianic kingdom, when HIS cities, i.e., those that belong to HIS people, the Jews, flourish with great prosperity and abundance. It will be at this time that God will fully comfort (נִחַם) (ἐλεήσει) the Jews, Zion, and Jerusalem and the Jews will demonstrate that they are definitely His chosen people (בְּחֵרָה) (ἀρεταιῆ).

Zechariah 2:12 “Yahweh will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

¹⁸ “Four” in other OT passages seems to refer to a quantity that is enough and in line with God’s purposes— Cf. **Jeremiah 15:3** “I will appoint over them **four** kinds of doom,” declares Yahweh: “the sword to slay, the dogs to drag off, and the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.”

30x in Ezekiel.

Daniel 1:17 As for these **four** youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams.

Zech. 2:6 “Ho there! Flee from the land of the north,” declares Yahweh, “for I have dispersed you as the **four** winds of the heavens,” declares Yahweh.”

Zech. 6:1 Now I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, **four** chariots were coming forth from between the two mountains; and the mountains were bronze mountains.

Zech. 6:5 The angel replied to me, “These are the **four** spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth,

“Horn” is symbolic of power, authority, and rule that effects even salvation because God is the horn of our salvation.

Psalm 18:2 Yahweh is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Daniel 7:24 ‘As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

Revelation 5:6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders [in the middle of the throne and the four living signs, and in the middle of the elders] a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

Revelation 17:12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.

¹⁹ Again, is God looking into the far distant future, so that the four rulers are those of four great powers that have or will “scatter” (רָחַץ) (διασκορπίσαντα) the Jews (Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem)? So the question is, who have scattered the Jews from the land of Israel? Assyria, Babylon, Rome, and the Beast? Or is the “four” merely meant to symbolize many peoples who oppose and oppress God’s people, the Jews, just as there will be many peoples who cooperate with God and Jesus with skill and wisdom to defeat Israel’s enemies and help restore the Kingdom of God on the land of Israel as in Revelation 19 & 20? This seems to make sense in the light of the mirror image of the “four” craftsmen who destroy these peoples and their power over the Jews.

²⁰ Cf. **2 Kings 24:14** Then he led away into exile all Jerusalem and all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land.

The above is when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was taken the southern kingdom of Judah into exile. Clearly he preferred to strong and the skillful.

There is also **Exodus 28:3** “You shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me.” Here “skillful” is literally wise of heart

(בְּחָכְמָה) (τοῖς σοφοῖς τῆ διανοίᾳ). These are men who have the ability to make things for the temple and be successful at producing them. They are really good at their trade. They have the “spirit of wisdom” (רוּחַ חָכְמָה) (πνεύματος αἰσθησεως).

They are like good jewelers – **Exodus 35:35** “He has filled them with skill (בְּחָכְמָה) (σοφίας καὶ συνεσεως διανοίᾳς) to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in scarlet material, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs.”

Just as the four horns are symbolic of four kings and empires (or many peoples throughout history) that have scattered (opposed and oppressed) the Jews, the four craftsmen must be symbolic of wise and skillful kings and empires (peoples) who will regather them into the land of Israel, to rule over them and protect them from any further harm. Could, therefore, these four craftsmen be symbolic of only the Messiah? Probably not, but certainly he is involved in accomplishing this task for the Jews? The four craftsmen could also refer to God, the Messiah, the *angeloi* of Yahweh who fight with the Messiah, and the resurrected believers who do also. Yes, more likely the believers as peoples who support the Jews as the chosen people of God. Or these are just the judgments of God that will be focused on the Jews but will also affect the Gentile nations. Probably not, but instead are peoples who cooperate with God to defeat Israel’s enemies.

²¹ The craftsmen, as envoys of God, terrify the nations who have scattered the Jews. They also “throw down” the horns, meaning that they destroy their power and empires.

The question is, is this a final destruction of the power of these nations as when Jesus returns, or is this along the way of history until this last time? Or has God already performed this event and Persian is the four craftsmen, having destroyed Assyria, Babylon, etc.? Like the other visions (?), this seems to point to far distant future of this age when God fulfills His promise to the Abraham to make the Jews a “great nation.” So the final destruction of the power of these peoples and nations.

²² This vision extends beyond the time of Zechariah and the returning exiles to when God’s brings such prosperity and protection to Jerusalem and the Jews that He must be referring to the messianic kingdom of the millennium. This means that the Jews’ return to Jerusalem from Babylon and their rebuilding both the city and the temple is merely the first of many stages of God’s blessings (and judgments) that will culminate in Jesus’ return and the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel for the remaining time of the existence of the present realm.

This is the only place in the OT where the combination **מִבְּלֵ מִדָּה** (=measuring line) is used. But the idea of measuring and using a rope or some instrument is found at least 14x in the prophets, meaning that there is something substantial and significant present (over that will be present because God plans to rebuild Jerusalem to its greatest height in glory) that allows for measuring. As in Zechariah 1:16, it is a city with buildings for dwelling and sustaining life, as well as the temple of God.

Cf. **Ezekiel 40:3** So He brought me there; and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, with a line of flax and a measuring rod in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway.

²³ The issue here is how large is Jerusalem? Is it great or small? If it is small, then God is not blessing the Jews. If it is great, He is. In vs. 4&5 God says through His *angelos* that Jerusalem will not have walls because of how numerous the Jews will be, and it will be because of God’s glory and protection in their midst.

EBC – The measuring was done with expansion in view; now that purpose is to be achieved. The promise is given that Jerusalem will become so large and prosperous that it will expand beyond its walls. Indeed, it will overflow so much that it will be as though it had no walls. Evidently many of its people and animals will have to live in the surrounding unwallled villages (cf. Ezek 38:11). Nothing like this has yet happened in the history of the city (certainly not in the time of Nehemiah, as is clear from Neh 7:4; 11:1-2). For this reason some commentators take the language of this and the following verses “spiritually” and apply it to the expansion of the church or the New (heavenly) Jerusalem. But Feinberg (p. 45) responds vigorously to such an approach: “What baseless and unfounded hermeneutical alchemy is this which will take all the prophecies of judgment upon Israel at their face value, to be understood literally, but will transmute into indistinctness any blessing or promise of future glory for the same people? It is a sad state when men cannot see how kingdom conditions can exist alongside of spirituality. TO many minds the introduction of literalness in kingdom promises does away with spirituality. What is so unspiritual about the personal, visible reign of the Messiah of Israel? Does not the same Word that predicts it also state clearly that from that Jerusalem, the seat of the government of the righteous King, will go forth the law and the Word of Jehovah (Isa 2:14)? Wherein is the law lacking in spirituality? Paul declares the law to be holy, righteous, and good (Rom. 7:12) Again, we must maintain that literalness and a material kingdom with material conditions of prosperity *in no wise* exclude or militate against spirituality (emphasis his).” The realization of the full scope of this prophecy must therefore still be in a future earthly kingdom.

²⁴ God’s spokesman, the original *angelos* who has been instructing Zechariah, is leaving Jerusalem, while there is another *angelos* is also leaving with the express purpose of meeting the first *angelos*.

²⁵ The second *angelos* urges the first to run and speak to Zechariah (not the surveyor). God is going to bless the Jews and this city, Jerusalem. This is the blessing of the Jews both spiritual and physically that corresponds to the cursing and judgment of the Jews both spiritually and physically. This also means that the blessing will take place in the future earthly kingdom when Jesus returns.

²⁶ God will eventually protect Jerusalem and the Jews, and His presence there will be glorious, which is probably referring to the Messiah and His presence in the city when he returns.

The wall of fire is similar to the pillar of fire in Exodus 13:21.

²⁷ At this point in the vision, God exhorts the Jews left behind in Babylon to flee that city and return to Jerusalem with its current residents who had come back in 538-537 B.C. But there is probably reference to Jews in other parts of the ANE since God refers to His having scattered them “as the four winds of heaven.” The God who has dispersed them is not entreating them to return—not only to a physical location, Jerusalem, but also to a spiritual condition of repentance and authentic faith.

The question is, “Why have these Jews who are still in “exile” NOT doing everything they can to return to the city and land which God has designated as His own and which He has given to them? Implied is that a Jewish heart of genuine faith should find itself longing to be in Jerusalem.

²⁸ God calls the Jews “Zion” because this is their only legitimate home on this earth—the land of Israel. God is commanding them to “Escape”! From what, though? Not sure. Maybe just from the influence of that culture. This would be similar to God’s call the “believing” Jews as the final destruction of Jerusalem and the Jews is about to take place before Jesus returns—

Revelation 18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. **2** And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. **3** “For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.” **18:4** And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “**Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues;** **5** for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.”

²⁹ EBC – While many think “me” refers to Zechariah, others maintain that in the light of the language and the full scope of these verses, it looks toward the messianic Servant-Messenger, the Angel of the Lord (so Baron, Feinberg, Leupold, Unger). If the latter view is correct, as seems likely, the speaker, identified as the Lord Almighty at the beginning of the verse, is the Messiah

himself, the Angel of the Lord.

The verse begins with כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה זְבַחֹהוּ.

The adverb כִּי can refer to what precedes or follows it, depending on the context. Same with τὰδε in the LXX. The NAS95 punctuates this verse as though the beginning clause refers to what follows, which makes it one of the verses that interpreters probably use to identify Yahweh with the 2nd person of the Trinity, the Son of God, the Messiah, and Jesus. However, it makes more sense that the beginning of the verse, “For thus says Yahweh of hosts” is referring to what precedes it as in v. 6, so that the rest of v. 8 and the whole of v. 9 is a quote not of Yahweh but of another person. This is because the quote afterwards would have someone else sending “Yahweh of hosts” to perform these tasks. But if Yahweh is the transcendent creator, then this makes no sense. Who would send the transcendent creator to perform a task? No one. Unless...

So who is “he” of the following quote? There are three plausible options—1) Zechariah? But would God send a sinful man to perform such a remarkable rescue of his people? Not likely. 2) The *angelos* speaking with Zechariah? In other words, the Angel of Yahweh as a theophany within the creation who obviously speaks and acts on behalf of the transcendent creator, even to destroy His and the Jews’ enemies and to rescue the Jews. This would be like the “mighty angels in flaming fire” of 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and the armies which accompany Jesus at his return in Revelation 19. 3) Someone else not yet introduced, even someone whom Zechariah and his listeners, including the Jews still in exile, should recognize because of his stated role and because of their knowledge of God from the OT? This could then be the Messiah, Jesus himself who is being made to speak before he appears on earth.

#3 is tempting, and the Jews would be familiar to predictions of the coming Messiah and even be able to make this association. This would be the person whom they already know through the rest of the OT and from other prophets to be the expected Messiah who will free them from their enemies and establish God’s kingdom on earth permanently, or at least until God destroys the present realm and creates a new one (cf. Revelation 20 & 21). As a result, vs. 8 & 9 would be a parenthetical statement by a cameo appearance of one who will come in the future—the Messiah.

But the context lends itself more to #2 and is still parenthetical, because there is no “declares Yahweh” connected to it. The coming Messiah is called Israel’s king in Zechariah 9:9, and God in Zechariah is also called Israel’s and the earth’s king in Zechariah 14:9. Therefore, it would make sense that the *angelos* of Yahweh sounds just like the Messiah, who will be the icon of God as Paul calls him in 2 Corinthians 4:4. And He sounds just like Yahweh as a theophany.

Revelation “He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.”

³⁰ In line with my suggestion in 2:8, the *angelos* of Yahweh is speaking of God’s sending Him.

³¹ The text returns to direct quotes by Yahweh through the “angel” speaking to Zechariah. The joy of the Jews is to be found in God’s presence among them, which will take on corporeal form as Jesus as the icon of God on earth. But this is all future to Zechariah and his audience. They must wait until they die and are resurrected to engage the messianic kingdom and God’s rule and presence in this manner. So it will not be just in the temple where Yahweh dwells among His people, the Jews. It will be in the person of the Messiah.

Cf. 1:16; 8:3 – Once again God says that He will return to Jerusalem to dwell among His people = protect them and provide for them abundantly.

³² Here is another parenthetical statement by the *angelos* of Yahweh, who now

In addition to Jewish belief and loyalty to God and the Messiah, the Gentiles will submit to the two of them too. This will also be a fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. Cf. **Genesis 12:3** And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

³³

Zechariah 1:17 “Again, proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and Yahweh will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.””’”

³⁴ This Joshua is most likely the same person as Jeshua in Ezra and Nehemiah—**Ezra 2:2** These came with Zerubbabel, **Jeshua**, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel. And **Nehemiah 9:4** Now on the Levites’ platform stood **Jeshua**, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

Chapter 3 highlights Israel’s role as a kingdom of priests who are to instruct the rest of the world in the matter of God’s justice and mercy. Cf. **Exodus 19:6** and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” Joshua will stand in for the entire people of Israel and be forgiven and prepared for the priestly role that will finally be realized in the millennial kingdom.

The *angelos* of Yahweh is continuing to act on God’s part and show Zechariah what is going on.

The arch-accuser of God’s people, whether the Jews or believers among both the Jews and the Gentiles, is Satan. His hope is that he can convince God to abandon His people, whether the nation of Israel or believers of any ethnic group.

Cf. **Leviticus 26:40-44** ‘If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me — I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies — or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land. ‘For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes. ‘Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.

Cf. **Jeremiah 31:35-37** Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; the LORD of hosts is His name: “If this fixed order departs from before Me,” declares the LORD, “Then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me forever.” Thus says the LORD, “If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done,” declares the LORD. [And these verses are right after God’s declaration of making a New Covenant with the Jews, bolstering the fact that He will do so and no one will stop Him.]

Cf. **Romans 3:1-4** Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, “THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.”

³⁵ First, here is a situation where Yahweh speaks for Yahweh, i.e., the *angelos* of Yahweh speaks for Yahweh. Secondly, either Satan does not even get the opportunity to voice his accusation or Zechariah does not provide it, but God squashes it immediately and states that He has chosen and continues to choose Jerusalem and the Jews as His chosen people. Plus, while He knows that Joshua and Israel deserve the fire of judgment and destruction, by His grace He is rescuing them from this fire. As a result, Satan’s accusation is falling on deaf ears and will not stand up in God’s law court.

A “brand” is a piece of smoldering wood.

³⁶ Joshua as representative of Israel is covered with dung as he serves God, standing before the *angelos* of Yahweh, and therefore is in need of cleansing, i.e., forgiveness for his sins.

דָּבָר is derived from דָּבַר = excrement, dung; ῥύπαρά = filthy, soiled, defiled

Cf. **Isaiah 64:6** For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

³⁷ The *angelos* of Yahweh commands those who are standing before Joshua (or the *angelos*, i.e., conventional angels?; or both, and they are still conventional angels in the vision) to remove his soiled clothes as symbolic of his forgiveness, and by inference from what He goes on to say, Joshua’s clothes are replaced with pure white clothes used to celebrate and be joyful.

חֲבוּרֵי שָׂרָף = fine, white, festival clothes (cf. Isaiah 3:22); ποδῆρη = reaching to the feet

³⁸ Zechariah requested the clean turban on Joshua’s head. As the *angelos* of Yahweh stood by and looked on with approval, Joshua was “cleansed” and forgiven as the nation of Israel will be in the millennial kingdom.

טַבָּחַיִם = turban; κίδαριον = turban

Exodus 28:4 “These are the garments which they shall make: a breastpiece and an ephod and a robe and a tunic of checkered work, a turban (טַבָּחַיִם) (κίδαριον) and a sash, and they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister as priest to Me.”

Cf. **Zechariah 6:11** “Take silver and gold, make an ornate crown (טִבְעֵי זָהָב = crowns, i.e., ornate crown; στεφάνους = wreaths, crowns) and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.”

³⁹ The effect of Joshua’s (Israel’s) forgiveness and appropriate, biblical obedience will be that he and they will fulfill their role as God originally intended. 1) They will administrate correctly the temple of God where He dwells among His people. 2) They will judge moral issues correctly. 3) They will have complete and unhindered access to God as the angels do.

Cf. **Exodus 19:6** and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’

Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by “a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

⁴⁰ The *angelos* of Yahweh makes it clear to Joshua that he and the rest of the Jews in Jerusalem at this time are a “symbol” or sign (טֹטְפוֹת) (τερατοσκόποι) for the time of the coming of the Branch in the future. In other words, this vision points to the future when the Branch will come from God and rule Israel and the world.

The Branch is the Messiah, the

צֶמֶחַ = sprout, shoot of a plant; ἀνατολή = the rising, dawning (of the day, changing from darkness to light).

Cf. **Exodus 4:21** The LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.”

Jeremiah 23:5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.”

⁴¹ This stone is most likely symbolic of the Branch and the Messiah, the permanent ruler. Seven eyes as in Revelation 5:6 are symbolic of Jesus’ ability to see all that God wanted him to do when he was on earth—much more than any normal human being in regard to what is going on in the people around him.

What is the inscription which Yahweh writes on the stone? We are not told, but it may have something to do with the Messiah’s role to bring about forgiveness of sin as He goes on to mention. And this will happen for Israel “in one day,” i.e., on the day that Jesus returns and God changes the hearts of all the Jews who will begin the millennial kingdom living on the land of Israel. This will be the removal of iniquity from the land (of Israel).

Revelation 5:6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

⁴² There will finally be peace and safety for all the Jews living on the land of Israel. Cf. Isaiah 11:1-9.

1 Kings 4:25 So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

Romans 11:26-27 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.” “THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”

⁴³ This sounds like a large bowl on the top of the lampstand, with seven smaller bowls/lamps around the edge of it, with seven spouts where wicks could be placed around each of the smaller bowls/lamps. Therefore, there are a total of 49 wicks for producing light.

Lamps produce light = the propagation of truth

The lamps are 1) the temple as it sends forth its message of the presence and holiness of God.

⁴⁴ The more detailed explanation of these olive trees is in vs. 11-14.

Olive trees produce olive oil that can be burned for the production of light = the source of energy and power for producing light

⁴⁵ “These” would be either 1) the entire setup of the lamps and olive trees, or 2) just the olive trees.

⁴⁶ The “great mountain” is either 1) the rubble on the top of the temple mount that needs to be leveled to complete the rebuilding of the temple, or 2) the difficult task (for whatever reason, outside opposition (cf. Ezra 4:1-5) and/or the unwillingness of the people to persevere in the face of opposition (Haggai 2:1-9)) of rebuilding the temple that will require God’s Spirit to bring it to its completion.

Probably #2.

When Zerubbabel completes the new temple, he and the builders will shout, “Grace, grace,” because they will acknowledge that it will be only God’s grace that will have ultimately caused them to finish this task.

⁴⁷ Vs. 8 (or maybe even 6)-10 are possibly parenthetical.

⁴⁸ The foundation of the temple was laid in 537-536 B.C. It is now 519 B.C., 18 years later, and the project is not yet complete. It will take another 3 years and be complete in 516 B.C.

Here “the word of Yahweh” has stated categorically and emphatically that Zerubbabel will finish the rebuilding of the temple.

The person speaking is the *angelos* of Yahweh.

⁴⁹ The “day of small things” 1) the beginning of the project of rebuilding the temple where it was obvious that it would not be as magnificent a building as before, or 2) the project as a whole with the same perspective.

“These seven” are 1) the men who are working on the project with Zerubbabel, or 2) the seven eyes of God, who sees all things. Or the verse could be translated “but they will be glad when... These seven are the eyes of Yahweh which...”, referring to those who doubted or were discouraged when they had to start rebuilding the temple and to the seven lamps on the bowl at the top of the lampstand.

Haggai 2:3 ‘Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison?’

⁵⁰ It sounds as though each of the olive trees has one branch from which oil flows into a pipe that empties into the seven lamps at the top of the lampstand.

⁵¹ “These” refer to 1) the olive trees, or 2) the olive branches. Probably #1 since they are “standing by the Lord.”

“Two anointed ones” is literally “two sons of oil,” most likely in this context referring to Zerubbabel as representative of the kings of the line of David and to Joshua as representative of priests of the line of Levi. These two responsibilities will combine in the Messiah as Davidic king and High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. So this may be the point of this vision, to encourage both Zechariah and Zerubbabel, and mainly Zerubbabel in this vision while Zechariah was encouraged in the previous one that featured Joshua.

⁵² In the light of the LXX and both the Hebrew and Greek of 5:3, it makes more sense to interpret the object as a sickle that enters into the houses of those who disobey the Mosaic Covenant, either by stealing from their fellow Jews, perhaps through extortion or deception, or by falsely worshiping God with an unchanged heart that makes their religious actions merely following a script. A sickle is definitely a deadly instrument, while a scroll is not. God will judge and kill those are guilty of disobeying Him. And it probably makes sense that this will take place just before the return of the Messiah when God fulfills His promise to Abraham to transform his descendants into a “great nation.”

כְּסֵפֶר = scroll, but LXX has δρέπανον = sickle. And verse 4 does not have the words “the writing on one side” and “the writing on the other side.” It says only “from this,” i.e., “according to it.” It also adds the words “until death,” which the Hebrew could support with the change of a few letters.

⁵³ The LXX reads καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς με Αὕτη ἡ ἀρὰ ἡ ἐκπορευομένη ἐπὶ πρόσωπον πάσης τῆς γῆς, διότι πᾶς ὁ κλέπτῃς ἐκ τούτου ἕως θανάτου ἐκδικηθήσεται, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἐπίορκος ἐκ τούτου ἕως θανάτου ἐκδικηθήσεται.

⁵⁴ God’s judgment will reach not only the people who disobey His covenant, but also their homes. Complete physical destruction of lives and property. This too sounds like God’s judgments of Revelation before Jesus’ return.

⁵⁵ The ephah sounds like a measuring cup or basket, but it has to be large enough for a woman to fit inside and a lead covering placed over the top of it. It is going out/up, i.e. being lifted up probably from Jerusalem and the land of Israel to be placed in the land of Shinar in vs. 9-11. God has measured the entirety of Israel’s disobedience and will either 1) judge them for it and displace them (again) to Babylon, i.e., death before Jesus returns, or 2) forgive them and thus remove their wickedness from the land in

the millennial kingdom when he changes the hearts of the 144,000 of Revelation. Since these visions look to the distant future, #2 is more probably the correct interpretation.

“This is their appearance (lit. “the eyes; ἡ ἀδικία αὐτῶν = their unrighteous deeds) in all land” – The basket will contain the woman “Wickedness” as symbolic of all Israel’s unrighteousness, which God will transport (or have has transported already) to Babylon (Shinar), which is the seat of rebellion against God. The basket with the woman and the lead cover are a way to demonstrate the Jews’ disobedience of God along with God’s judgment of them—1) either (or both) by means of the Babylonian captivity in the past 2) or (and) by means of their death before Jesus’ return 3) or by means of their forgiveness through Jesus’ death. Could be both #2 and #3—the expulsion from the land of Israel of abject rebellion against God and the forgiveness of those who remain alive into the millennial kingdom.

הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת = the ephah which is going out, while LXX has τὸ μέτρον τὸ ἐκπορευόμενον = the measure which is going out.

⁵⁶ Most likely the woman represents all of evil Israel similar to “Babylon, the great harlot” in the book of Revelation.

הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת = the evil; ἡ ἀνομία

⁵⁷ Wicked Israel will be planted in a prominent position in the land of “Babylon” (Βαβυλωνος) as a demonstration to the rest of the world of God’s judgment on her and/or forgiveness of her—probably forgiveness with all these visions looking forward to the millennial kingdom. But it could be both, so that Israel is the height of evil, because they are God’s chosen people and definitely should know better on the basis of all that God has revealed to them about morality.

Genesis 10:10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar [Babylon, including ancient Sumer and Akkad].

EBC – שִׁנְיָאֵר corresponds to the name *Singaera* found in Assyrian texts, and is to be identified with the modern site of *Sinjaer* in the *Jebel Sinjaer* (west of Mosul). Baldwin (*Zechariah*, p. 130), agreeing with Frey, suggests that if “the removal of Wickedness to Babylon is in preparation for the final onslaught between good and evil, the vision leaves no doubt about the outcome. God has evil in His power.” Feinberg (p. 93) concludes: “The two visions of our chapter thus bring before us God’s twofold method of dealing with sin in His people. He pours out His wrath upon the transgressors who are impenitent, and then sees to the utter removal and banishment of sin from the land, that it may in truth be the holy land.” Second Corinthians 7:1 provides an appropriate application for us: “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.”

⁵⁸ In the first vision there were horsemen on different colored horses who patrolled the earth. Here there are four chariots driven by horses of similar colors. Chariots are typically used for war. These four “spirits,” i.e., the spirits or *angeli* of Yahweh will patrol the earth and appease God’s wrath by bringing about judgment and destruction on people of the north (the direction from which many of Israel’s enemies have come over time (6:8), and probably the south is being implied too (another direction from which Israel’s enemies have come).

⁵⁹ “with one of which” is referring not the red horses. The black horses go north with them while the white and dappled horses go south. Israel’s enemies have come from both directions—Assyria and Babylon from the north and Egypt from the south.

⁶⁰ The strong ones are the four spirits, who are symbolic of God’s presence, His *angeli*, who carry out His purposes.

וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּאֶרֶץ לְהוֹלִיכָם אֶתְּ הָאֲרָצוֹת = to walk around/patrol the earth; τοῦ περιοδεῦσαι τὴν γῆν = to journey around the earth (cf. Zechariah 1:10

וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּאֶרֶץ לְהוֹלִיכָם אֶתְּ הָאֲרָצוֹת לְכֹהֵן הַתְּהִלָּה לְכֹהֵן הַתְּהִלָּה לְכֹהֵן הַתְּהִלָּה לְכֹהֵן הַתְּהִלָּה; καὶ περιοδεύσατε τὴν γῆν καὶ περιώδευσαν τὴν γῆν καὶ περιοδεύσατε τὴν γῆν καὶ περιώδευσαν τὴν γῆν

⁶¹ God commands Zechariah to go to some recently returning exiles from Babylon and to take an offering from them of gold and silver.

⁶² Next Zechariah is to fashion the offering of silver and gold from the exiles into a stunning crown. This is one crown, but the Hebrew plural implies a crown that is to beat all crowns. Thus it is “ornate.” And Zechariah places a crown fit for the greatest king of all time on the head of the high priest of Israel, Joshua, whose name in the LXX is Jesus (Ἰησοῦς).

This Joshua is the same person as in Zechariah 3:1 and most likely the Jeshua in Ezra and Nehemiah—**Ezra 2:2** These came with Zerubbabel, **Jeshua**, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel. And **Nehemiah 9:4** Now on the Levites’ platform stood **Jeshua**, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

עֲטֹתָיִם = crowns, i.e., ornate crown; στεφάνους = wreaths, crowns

Revelation 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems (*διαδήματα*); and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

⁶³ There will be a future “Branch,” whom the crowned king-priest Joshua represents. This man will sprout up and branch out from where he is located, from what is underneath him, i.e., the land of Israel to rule over the whole world. Or he branches out to be both priest and king as shown in this vision.

And his responsibility will be to “build the temple of Yahweh.” Two options – 1) the physical temple of the millennial/messianic kingdom of Israel on earth, which temple will finally be used as it should be by Jews of circumcised hearts; 2) the people of God who are authentic believers, Christians who here the message of the Messiah and genuine OT believers such as Abraham and others.

וַיֵּצֵא מִתַּחַת וַיִּצְמַח וַיֵּצֵא מִתַּחַת וַיִּצְמַח = and he will branch out/sprout from underneath it; καὶ ὑποκάτωθεν αὐτοῦ ἀνατελεῖ = and he will spring up from beneath it/him.

Cf. **Micah 5:2** “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

⁶⁴ In this verse, the angeloi of Yahweh emphasizes that the future “Branch” will combine and take responsibility for the two highest offices in Israel (and in any ANE nation/empire), that of king and priest.

EBC – The clause at the end of the verse means that the messianic Branch will combine the two offices of king and priest in full accord. As Ellis (p. 1035) puts it, the prophecy looks “forward to a time when kingly and priestly rule are combined in one.” Apparently passages like this caused the priestly sect of Qumran to expect two messianic figures “at the end of the days”: (1) the eschatological high priest-Messiah of the line of Phinehas (cf. Num 25:10-13) and (2) the eschatological son-of-David Messiah (2 Sam 7). Thus they were expecting a priestly Messiah and a kingly Messiah, with the priestly one ranked above the kingly one. Since it seems clear that the sect at Qumran was priestly, it is not surprising that there the priestly Messiah was elevated over the kingly Messiah. Both Messiahs were to be God’s instruments in the end time, when the true priesthood and the legitimate monarchy were to be restored in accordance with God’s promise. The Qumran community also believed in the coming of an eschatological prophet, but there is some doubt as to whether or not they regarded him as messianic (cf. further TDNT, 9:511-20; F.F. Bruce, *Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956], pp. 80-89). Of course, the point of the biblical passages is that the two offices and functions will be united in the one person of the Messiah, the Davidic king (see Ps 110; Heb 5; 7).

⁶⁵ “Those who are far off” refers to Gentiles who will help build the temple that the future king-priest will build. The angelos of Yahweh finishes His statements to Zechariah by saying that the Gentiles’ coming to build God’s temple will demonstrate that God has sent Him to Zechariah to state the truth. Or that God has sent the Branch, who is now speaking, to build the temple and become the focal point of human history for God’s glory.

And all this will take place on the condition that Zechariah as representative of all Jews obeys God genuinely—with a changed heart, which God has promised to Israel in Deuteronomy 30.

⁶⁶ Chapters 7 & 8 recount both God’s recent wrath and judgment towards His chosen people, the Jews, for their hard hearts and disobedience, and God’s future blessing of the Jews when He regathers them into the land of Israel and they live in total safety, peace, and prosperity while also teaching and attracting Gentiles to come to Israel and learn about God and his grace and mercy from them.

This is two years after the 8 night visions, etc. of chapters 1-6.

EBC – The date in v.1 is equivalent to 7 December 518 B.C., not quite two years after the eight night visions... In this section, Israel was to repent and live righteously after the punishment of her captivity.

⁶⁷ EBC – To judge from the foreign names—Sharezer and Regem-Melech—the members of the delegation had probably been born in Babylonia.

⁶⁸ The question is whether or not to continue fasting and thus to seek God’s favor as the exiles had done in Babylon for 70 years now that they have returned to Israel and Jerusalem and are rebuilding the temple. It would seem that the purpose of the fasting is no longer existent.

Cf. the more detailed statement of four fasts of [Zechariah 8:18](#) Then the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying, [19](#) “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, ‘The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.

The Illustrated Family Encyclopedia (8:93) says: Counting the beginning of the year from the month of Nisan, the Jewish sages identified these dates as follows (in the Talmudical tractate *Rosh Hashanah* 18b): the fast of the fourth month fell on the ninth of Tammuz, the day when the city walls were breached (2 Kings 25:3-4; Jer. 39:2); the fast of the fifth month was on the ninth of Ab, when the house of God was destroyed by fire (2 Kings 25:8-10); the fast of the seventh month was on the third of Tishri, the anniversary of the assassination of Gedaliah the son of Ahikam (ibid. 25; Jer. 41:2); and the fast of the tenth month fell on the tenth of Tebeth, which was the day when the king of Babylon laid siege to Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:1, Ezek. 24:2). In Zechariah’s day, sixty-eight years after the destruction, when the rebuilding of the Temple was almost complete, the question naturally arose whether the time had not come to annul these fasts, since Jeremiah’s prophecy about the duration of the exile might well be thought to have been fulfilled.

⁶⁹ God states that the exiles’ fasting to seek His grace and forgiveness in Babylon was overall not genuine. They thought they were being repentant, which is exactly what they should have been after God has disciplined them with His judgment. But even after being transported all the way to Babylon, their hearts are not quite into it. So why are they even asking for forgiveness if they do not really want it?

⁷⁰ Indeed, did not the former prophets try to warn the Jews that they were not being genuinely repentant and obedient towards God before the exile, so that what God is saying to them now is basically the same message as the former prophets to the previous generations.

⁷¹ God recounts His message to the previous generations, that they were to repent and obey Him according to the Mosaic Covenant and its commandments of love and compassion towards their fellow Jews, especially the poor and needy. The implication seems to be that the Jews and their hearts have not really changed all that much. They still need to repent and obey God with authentic inwardness and faith.

⁷² God reminds the delegation from Bethel and all current Jews that there were grave ramifications for the previous generations who refused to listen to His rebuke and warning. God got angry with them.

⁷³ One ramification of incurring God’s wrath was that He refused to listen when His judgment came upon them in the form of the Assyrians and Babylonians and their respective destructions, captivities, and exiles.

⁷⁴ Two other ramifications of incurring God’s wrath was that 1) the Israelites of both kingdoms were exiled from the land and scattered among the Gentile nations and empires and 2) the land was basically made inhabitable by their enemies who destroyed buildings and property.

⁷⁵ But God's wrath with the results of His refusing to hear His people's prayers, their exiles, and the destruction of property on the land of Israel is not the end of His story with them. His wrath will eventually turn away from the Jews and towards the nations who have harmed them and continue to seek to harm them. And this is because of His jealousy for His chosen people. He will abhor their being mistreated by other peoples.

EBC – In this section Israel is to repent and live righteously because of the promise of her future restoration.

⁷⁶ Cf. 1:16; 2:10 – Israel's glorious future will include God's returning to dwell in Jerusalem, i.e., a new temple. And instead of the lies of previous generations, the truth about God will exist only among His people so that the message of this truth will go out to the rest of the world. The "mountain of Yahweh" is probably the temple mount which will once again be "holy" and set apart for the purpose of having His temple on it. And it will be a real temple.

עִיר־אֱמֶת = City of Truth/Faithfulness; πόλις ἡ ἀληθινή = the true city, i.e., the city that is truly God's and therefore the city of truth.

⁷⁷ The Jews will grow old in safety and comfort in the city so that they can sit and relax and chat with one another without worrying about someone coming to attack them and harm them.

Cf. **Isaiah 65:17** "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. **18** "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing and her people for gladness. **19** "I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. **20** "No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed. **21** "They will build houses and inhabit them; they will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. **22** "They will not build and another inhabit, they will not plant and another eat; for as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, and My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. **23** "They will not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, and their descendants with them. **24** "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. **25** "The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD. EBC – On these verses Perowne (p. 102) says: "We read, as a fulfillment of this prophecy, that in the days of Simon, in the times of the Maccabees, 'the ancient men sat all in the streets communing together of good things' (1 Macc 14:9); while our Lord alludes to the games of children in the market-place, as a familiar incident in His own days. Matt. xi. 16, 17." Although it may be possible to regard these historical references as stages in the progressive fulfillment of the passage, they certainly do not completely fulfill the scope of this grand prophecy as a whole. The final stage awaits the second advent of the Messiah.

⁷⁸ And young people will enjoy the safe streets likewise by playing in them freely and joyfully. The streets will be a safe playground for the Jewish children.

⁷⁹ It will seem too good to be true for the Jews of the messianic kingdom that they are living such wonderful lives—especially in contrast to what they have just been through under the Beast of Revelation. However, it is a piece of cake for God to pull off such a fulfillment of His promise to Abraham.

⁸⁰ God will "save" the Jews from the oppression they will be experiencing in foreign lands. This is another reference to regathering them—cf. Isa 11:11-12; 43:5-7; Jer 30:7-11; 31:7-8.

Deuteronomy 30:1 "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, **2** and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, **3** then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. **4** "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.

Isaiah 11:11 Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. **12** and He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

There is also **Isaiah 27:12** "In that day the LORD will start His threshing from the flowing stream of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered up one by one, O sons of Israel. **13** It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem." This in the context of God's restoring Israel and giving them the greatness He has promised them in Genesis 12. And it also may refer to Gentiles who will join the Jews and worship God "in Jerusalem" so to speak, either literally or metaphorically by doing so from genuine hearts of belief and faith.

Isaiah 43:5 "Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. **6** "I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, **7** everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made.

cf. Jer. 30:7-11

Jeremiah 31:7 For thus says the LORD, "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise and say, 'O LORD, save Your people, the remnant of Israel.' **8** "Behold, I am bringing them from the north country, and I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and she who is in labor with child, together; a great company, they will return here. **9** "With weeping they will come, and by supplication I will lead them; I will make them walk by streams of waters, on a straight path in which they will not stumble; for I am a father to

Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn.”

Zechariah 9:13 For I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece; and I will make you like a warrior's sword. **14** Then the LORD will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning; and the Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and will march in the storm winds of the south.

I lean towards #1 for interpreting Malachi 4:1 and #2 above for interpreting the verses in Mark and Matthew, so that the other Jews who are left on the earth will be those whom God will inwardly change and gather to the land once Israel's enemies are destroyed by the Messiah, i.e., the 144,000 of Revelation. They will be Jews throughout the world who remain interested in God and being loyal to Him, but who are not changed inwardly until Jesus returns. In this way, they become the ones who return to the land and constitute the seedbed of Jews who go on to live in the millennial kingdom as genuine believers.

Also notice Jesus' words in the Olivet Discourse – The chosen who are gathered by the angels of God will come “from one end of the sky to the other” (Matthew) and “from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven” (Mark). It seems that this large extent refers to all the followers of God in history because of their authentic belief in Him by means of His having changed their hearts. Therefore, some will be resurrected from the dead, and some will be raptured and lifted off the earth—both Jews and Gentiles.

⁸¹ God will gather the Jews from where He has scattered them and return them to the land of Israel and to Jerusalem specifically. Finally they will be the kind of people whom He has called them to be from the beginning, starting with Abraham and continuing with Moses and the Mosaic Covenant.

EBC – “They will be my people, and I will be ... their God” is covenant terminology, pertaining to intimate fellowship in a covenant relationship (cf. Gen 17:7-8; Exod 6:7; 19:5-6; 29:45-46; Lev 11:45; 22:33; 25:38; 26:12, 44-45; Num 15:41; Deut 4:20; 29:12-13; Jer 31:33; 32:38; Ezek 37:27; 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:3). Although Israel may go through a Lo-Ammi (“Not My People”) stage, she will be fully restored as Ammi (“My People”). So says God himself in Hosea 1:8, 2:1; 2:23. It is true that Paul quoted Hosea in connection with Gentile salvation in Romans 9:25-26. But this is the application of a theological principle from the OT—the ultimate, complete, final fulfillment being yet future for Israel. The theological principle involved is that God is a saving, forgiving, delivering, restoring God—one who delights to take “Not My People” and make them “My People.” In the case of Gentiles, as in the church, he does this in his sovereign grace by grafting them into covenant relationship and blessing (Rom 11). Has Walter Wolff (Hosea [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974], p. 29) acknowledges as much: “Since the people outside Israel—who are Not-My-People and Without-Pity—are to become a part of the blessed people of God (Rom 9:24f; 1 Pet 2:10), these words take on a meaning unforeseen by the prophet. In this way the prophet's words are becoming fulfilled. But this is not yet completed with respect to Israel (Rom 10:1; 11:26) or the nations (Rev 7:9ff.).” Israel's restoration depends on the dependable—“faithful and righteous”—God.

⁸² God encourages the Jews of Zechariah's and Haggai's day who have returned to Jerusalem and are rebuilding the temple. All that He is saying about the future is intended to motivate them now to continue the project of rebuilding the temple—even though their work is a long way from the future glorious restoration. A good principle for all believers—keep doing our work now regardless of how much time there is between our present lives and the return of Jesus. Our own glorious future by means of the fulfillment of God's promise is our encouragement also to remain faithful to God in every mundane act of righteousness we can perform.

EBC – The people addressed in the long vocative are those who had been listening to the preaching of, first, Haggai (1:1) and then Zechariah (1:1; cf. Ezra 5:1-2), since 520 B.C. (it was now 518). The laying of the temple foundation referred to in this verse is, accordingly, not the original one in 536. Rather, it is best understood as follows: “As a more precise definition of יוֹם יָסַד [yom yussad, ‘when the foundation was laid’] the word לְהִבְנֹת [lehibbanot, ‘so that it may be built’] is added, to show that the time referred to is that in which the laying of the foundation of the temple in the time of Cyrus became an eventful fact through the continuation of the building” (KD, Minor Prophets, 2:315). To recapitulate the historical situation, although the foundation was restored in 536, the actual building of the superstructure was hindered from 536 to 530 (when it ground to a halt). Thus, in effect, the “founding” (almost in the sense of “building” or “rebuilding”) of the temple did not begin in earnest till 520. “Let your hands be strong” is a way of saying “be encouraged” (Judg 7:11).

⁸³ Because of Israel's disobedience, the Jews were in conflict with one another and ultimately experienced the conflict of their enemies, the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

EBC – The background for the verse appears to be the conditions described in Haggai 1:6-11; 2:15-19. “Before that time” refers to the period prior to 520 B.C. (at least 530–520 if not 536–520). “Before this work was started the commercial and civic situation was desperate” (Ellis, p. 1038). “No one could go about his business safely” is literally “No one could go out or come in safely.” NIV has captured the sense of the merism (“go out or come in”) by “go about his business.” “Enemy” included the Samaritans (Ezra 4:1-5).

⁸⁴ But eventually the “remnant,” the relatively small group in comparison to all the Jews who have lived in history, will never incur God's wrath and judgment so that they are each other's enemies and they are mistreated by Gentiles.

⁸⁵ Instead, the Jewish people will have abundant food and prosperity as symbolic of God's favor and total protection from their enemies.

⁸⁶ Two options for what God means by Israel's being a curse and blessing among the nations—1) God had brought His curse as promised in Deuteronomy 28 down on the Jews for their disobeying Him in the form of the Assyrians and the Babylonians, and He scattered them to be oppressed among the Gentile nations. But in the future when He dwells among them as He is describing here, He will bless them, [and they will become a blessing to the whole rest of the world by virtue of their demonstrating authentic faith and inwardness and teaching the Gentiles to obey Him likewise;] 2) God has cursed the Jews and they are a thorn in the side of the Gentiles among whom they live, but God will bless them and they will become a blessing in turn to the rest of

the world who will listen to them and learn about God from them. #2 makes more sense, that the curse and blessing of God on the Jews involves both what they experience from Him and the effect that they have on others—which has always been their intended purpose from God.

And God encourages the current Jews in Zechariah's day to stay strong in their faith, if they have it, and not to fear anything or anyone, because He will fulfill these promises to them which are the same promises He made to Abraham to make them a great nation.

EBC – “But now” shows that the reasons for the people's discouragement have passed; God would now provide grounds for encouragement. Verse 12 stands in contrast to Haggai 1:10-11. In Haggai 2:19, God through his prophet had predicted just such a reversal as we have here. The fecundity described is part of the covenant blessings for obedience promised in the Pentateuch (Lev 26:3-10; Deut 28:11-12) and in Ezekiel 34:25-27. On the other hand, Israel's being an object of cursing among the nations (v.13) is part of the covenant curses for disobedience threatened in Deuteronomy 28:15-68 and predicted in Jeremiah 24:9; 25:18; 29:22. On the fact that both Judah and Israel are addressed in this message of salvation and blessing, Perowne (p. 105) comments: “Not only the two tribes but the ten. This has never yet been fulfilled.” See also Jeremiah 31:1-31; Ezekiel 37:11-28. “As” God's old covenant people were an object of cursing, “so” God will save them (cf. vv.7-8), and they will be a blessing (cf. vv.20-23). Consequently they are not to fear but to be encouraged (cf. v.9 and the comment there).

⁸⁷ These two verses state that God's commitment to fulfill His promise to the Jews if they obey Him is just as strong as His commitment to judge and destroy them if they disobey Him.

עָוָה – לַעֲוֹבֵי + hiphil infinitive construct of עָוָה = to be evil, not fit for use, do evil and treat badly in hiphil.; τοῦ κακῶσαι = to do evil, harm, afflict

⁸⁸ Again, God's wrath as felt by the exiles will not be the final chapter of His story of the Jews. His grace and mercy will be. Thus, He exhorts and encourages them not to fear!!

EBC – In the past God had to bring disaster on them as covenantal discipline. On God's determination (v.14), see Jeremiah 4:28-51:12. The Hebrew phrase *lehara* here does not mean “to do evil” in a moral and ethical sense but “to bring disaster,” just as *raah* “is the ‘evil’ which someone does and the ‘disaster’ which he encounters in consequence” (Fohrer, “Twofold Aspects,” p. 102, cf. Isa 45:7). Strictly speaking the Hebrew for “showed no pity” does not mean “repented not” (KJV), as though God could repent (cf. 1 Sam 15:29; PS 110:4). Rather it means something like what NIV has (cf. Jer 20:16). “So now” (v.15) answers to “just as” (v.14): “the very sorrows of the past became pledges for the hopes of the future” (Chambers, CHS, 14:64). As strong as was God's determination to bring disaster (v.14), so strong is his determination to do good (v.15). On the nature of this doing good, see vv.12-13. This is cause for not being afraid (repeated from v.13 because the fulfillment is certain).

⁸⁹ But the Jews cannot just sit around and do nothing. Nor can they act any way they want, even immorally. As a result of God's faithfulness to His promises to them, they must **choose** to be honest in their dealings with one another and correct any wrongs for the sake of bringing about shalom in their nation and on their land.

Cf. [Deuteronomy 30:19](#) “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So **choose life** in order that you may live, you and your descendants, **20** by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.

EBC – After the announcement of God's gracious action (v.15) came the stipulation of what he expected from his people in grateful response. Thus their obedience in the moral and ethical sphere had a gracious basis, just as the law itself did (cf. Barker, “False Dichotomies” pp. 6-8). Jerusalem will indeed be “the City of Truth” (v.3) when its inhabitants are truthful and when true judgment is rendered in its courts. As NIV indicates, Hebrew shalom (“sound”) is probably best understood as descriptive of “judgment.” The root idea of the word seems to be “wholeness,” “completeness,” “soundness,” though it is used principally of a state of “well-being,” “health,” “harmony,” “peace,” “security,” and “prosperity.”

EBC – The Hebrew for “courts” is literally “gates.” The gates of cities in ancient Palestine often had built-in stone benches, where people could sit with friends, transact business, make legal contracts, hold “court,” make public proclamations, etc. (Ruth 4:1-2; 2 Sam 18:24). At Tell en-Nasbeh (Mizpah), a gate lined with stone benches which were seats for those conducting business there, has been found (WBE, 1:655-56).

⁹⁰ And they must avoid evil and lies in their society. In this way they will demonstrate themselves to be people who hunger and thirst for the righteousness which will actually exist in the messianic and millennial kingdom.

Perjury = the offense of willfully telling an untruth and lie in a court after having taken an oath or affirmation; וְשָׁבַעַת לְשָׁקֶר – and the oath of a lie; καὶ ὄρκον ψευδῆ = and the lying oath.

Cf. [Proverbs 6:16](#) There are six things which the LORD hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: **17** Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, **18** a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, **19** a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers.

EBC – One theological rationale for ethics, then, is awareness that God hates attitudes and actions contrary to his character. We are to love what God loves and hate what he hates.

⁹¹ Eventually the fasts of the Jews that they instituted in Babylon out of sadness and the loss of God's favor will become fasts of joy and celebration in the millennial kingdom because they will finally be experiencing God's promise to them of making them the greatest nation in all human history.

See Zechariah 7:2-3 for the four fasts.

Thus God encourages the Jews now in Zechariah's day to love truth and shalom by demonstrating these in their lives to the extent they can by God's grace.

EBC – “The manifestation of the kingdom will be attended by such a fulness of salvation that Judah will forget to commemorate

the former mournful events and will only have occasion to rejoice in the benefits of grace bestowed by God” (Unger, *Zechariah*, p. 148).

EBC – “Apart from the two great commandments (Lv. 19:18, 34; Dt. 6:5, and repeated elsewhere in Dt.), only in Amos 5:15 is there a command to love [in the OT], though in Psalm 31:23 there is an exhortation to love the Lord. The frequency or infrequency with which a truth occurs in Scripture is no guide to its importance” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 155, n. 1). Such love “underlies the whole covenant relationship and therefore also the ethics set out under the covenant as the condition of blessing” (ibid., p. 155).

⁹² Many cities meaning either 1) of the Jews, or 2) of the Gentiles. The words “many peoples” refers to #2. So Gentiles from many cities outside Israel will be attracted to Yahweh and the truth the Jews are exhibiting.

⁹³ The Gentiles of various cities will communicate with one another and encourage each other to travel and seek God’s grace and mercy among the Jews in Israel.

⁹⁴ Gentiles will travel to Jerusalem to seek God’s grace and mercy as the Jews demonstrate His truth to the rest of the world. Thus, this statement is more detailed than that in the verse before it.

EBC – “Jerusalem is no longer viewed simply as the heart of Judaism but as the centre of God’s dealings with all nations, and as a glorious realization of the ancient promise given to Abraham (cf. Gen. 12:3)” (Ellis, p. 1039). The purpose of the pilgrimage is to seek and entreat the Lord. “With the Davidic kingdom established, Israel will be a medium of blessing to the entire globe” (Unger, *Zechariah*, p. 148). See also Isaiah 55:5; 56:6-7 (cf. Mark 11:17).

⁹⁵ So not only will the Jews exhibit profound truth and obedience to God, but many (“ten”) Gentiles in proportion will recognize it and will want the Jews to teach them and help them obtain God’s grace and mercy.

EBC – “Ten” is one way of indicating a large or complete number in Hebrew (e.g., Gen 31:7; Lev 26:26; Num 14:22; 1 Sam 1:8; Neh 4:12). Baldwin (*Zechariah*, p. 156) points out: “The word *Jew* ... occurs first in Jeremiah 34:9, and only for the second time here. It is frequent in Ezra-Nehemiah.” Feinberg (p. 146) says, “The prophecy teaches, then, that Israel will be the means of drawing the nations of the earth to the Lord in the time of the Messiah’s reign of righteousness upon earth.”

⁹⁶ Why “burden”? Maybe Zechariah’s grasping it and passing it on to his contemporaries in Jerusalem. Or is this simply a “lifting up” of the message of God to the Jews, in which case is it really different from all the other messages in Zechariah’s book?

When are the events of vs. 1-8 occurring? 1) At the time of Alexander the Great who spared Jerusalem while conquering and destroying other peoples and their cities; 2) At the return of the Messiah when God will destroy Israel’s immediate enemies and protect the Jews who will be the first generation of the millennial kingdom—so that these ancient enemies are placeholders for future enemies.?

In vs. 1-7 God expresses His disapproval of the Gentile nations surrounding Israel and that He will punish them for their evil. In v. 8 God states that He will protect Israel. See the note at this verse for optional interpretations. that involves the Messiah who will pass through the land and then return with the result that no one will oppress the Jews ever again.

EBC – While chapters 1-8 contain occasional glimpses of future events, chapters 9-14 are almost exclusively eschatological. The future orientation is rendered more certain by the eighteen occurrences of the phrase “on that day.”

EBC – The theme of Part II centers around the judgment and blessing that accompany the appearance of the messianic King. The mood of the first oracle is characterized by change. In the midst of judgment (9:1-7), Israel finds deliverance (9:8). Yet in the midst of blessing (9:9-10:12), Israel experiences sorrow (11:1-17). And when the messianic King comes, he is rejected! The judgment with which the first oracle begins commences north of Palestine and proceeds south down the west coast of Syro-Palestine (9:1-7). But Israel will be preserved for the advent of her Messiah (9:8). Thus this first section stands in sharp contrast with 1:11 and prepares the way for 9:9. Those interpreters are probably correct who understand 9:1-8 as a prophetic description of the Lord’s march south to Jerusalem, destroying the traditional enemies of Israel.

EBC – As history shows, the agent of the Lord’s judgment was Alexander the Great. After defeating the Persians (333 B.C.), Alexander moved swiftly toward Egypt. On his march he toppled the cities in the Aramean (Syrian) interior, as well as those on the Mediterranean coast. Yet, on coming to Jerusalem, he refused to destroy it. Verse 8 attributes this protection to the miraculous intervention of God. (For a different and less literal approach to 9:1-8, see Baldwin, *Zechariah*, P. 158.)

EBC – BDB (p. 672) defines *massa* as meaning utterance, oracle, and Holladay (*Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, p. 217) lists “pronouncement” as the definition. If, as many lexicographers and exegetes believe, the term is derived from *nasa* (“to lift up”), this may shed some light on its meaning. The verb is used of lifting up or uttering a *masal* (“oracle”) in Numbers 23:7, 18; 24:3, 15, 20, 21, 23, and of lifting up the voice (NIV, “shouted”) in Judges 9:7 (“voice” is omitted from the Hebrew idiom in Isa 3:7; 42:2). *Nasa*, then, means not only “to carry,” hence the meaning “burden” for *massa*, but also “to lift up” in a more general sense. Therefore *massa* could refer to the “lifting up” of the voice i.e., to utter an oracle, hence the meaning “oracle.” The latter seems to fit the contents of these chapters.

⁹⁷ EBC – The last clause of v.2 may be either concessive (“though they are very skillful”; cf. Ezek 28:5) or causal (“because they think they are so wise”; cf. Ezek 28:4). Either way, their skill or wisdom is explained in v.3, which describes Tyre’s island fortress (Isa 23:4) and the great wealth she acquired through commerce. There is a wordplay (paronomasia) between “Tyre” (“rock”) and “stronghold” (or “rampart”) in the Hebrew (*sor masor*). “Stronghold” refers to the seemingly impregnable island defenses of offshore Tyre (New Tyre), which was surrounded by a wall 150 feet high. The similes in the rest of the verse underscore Tyre’s proverbial wealth. Despite her abundance and power, she will be destroyed (v.4). (For an account of Tyre’s fall [332 B.C.] and of Alexander’s role in it, see George Willis Botsford and Charles Alexander Robinson, Jr., *Hellenic History*, 4th ed. [New York: Macmillan, 1956], pp. 314-20, and Albert A. Trever, *History of Ancient Civilization* [New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1936], 1:456-59.)

⁹⁸ EBC – Perowne (p. 110), then, may well be correct in his judgment: “The prediction is, not that the then reigning monarch should perish, but that monarchical government should cease. Such tributary monarchies were abolished by Alexander.” “Foreigners” (v.6) probably refers to people of mixed nationality they characterized the postexilic period (Neh 13:23-24). “In the middle of verse 6 there is a change from the third to the first person. Now the Lord explains what He will do. He is going to transform the Philistines by breaking down their stubborn pride, removing repulsive ritual, and making them part of the ‘remnant’ of His people” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 161).

EBC – “Leaders” in the LXX is literally “chiliarch,” i.e., “leader of a thousand”; the Hebrew word (*allup*) occurs also in 12:5-6. Perowne (p. 111) asserts, “The meaning is that the Philistine, the nation personified as before, shall take his place, ruler and people, as one of the divisions of the Jewish nation.” This interpretation is confirmed by the prediction that Ekron (probably a synecdoche of a part for the whole) will be like the Jebusites in a good sense. When David conquered Jerusalem, he did not destroy the Jebusites; instead, they were absorbed into Judah (e.g., Araunah in 2 Sam 24:16; 1 Chronicles 21:18). So it will be with a remnant of the Philistines.

רָאִי = tribal chief; χιλίαρχος = military tribune, the commander of a cohort=600 men. So here a metonymy, the leader standing for the whole, i.e., a clan?

⁹⁹ This verse is difficult to translate and interpret, but the LXX is helpful. The gist of the verse is that God will guard and protect Israel so that never again will His people be oppressed by their enemies, and all this because God has seen and visited His people for the very purpose of fulfilling His promise to Abraham to make them a great nation.

Options for interpreting the details – 1) In accordance with the KJV and the NAS95, because of the army of the Beast of Revelation and because of Jesus who will pass through the land of Israel and then return, God will protect Israel from that time on; 2) In accordance with the CJB and LXX (?), God will protect Israel against all armies so that none of them will pass through the land once and return through it afterwards successfully.

וְהִנַּחְתִּי לְבֵיתִי מִצָּבָהּ מִעַבְרָה וּמִשָּׁב וְלֹא-יַעֲבֹר עָלֵיהֶם עוֹד נֶגֶשׁ כִּי עָתָה רָאִיתִי בְּעֵינָי וְהִנַּחְתִּי לְבֵיתִי מִצָּבָהּ מִעַבְרָה וּמִשָּׁב וְלֹא-יַעֲבֹר עָלֵיהֶם עוֹד נֶגֶשׁ כִּי עָתָה רָאִיתִי בְּעֵינָי – And I will camp around (?) my house, the garrison from passing over and from returning, and no oppressor will pass over them anymore, because now I have seen with my eyes.

καὶ ὑποστήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ μου ἀνάστημα τοῦ μὴ διαπορευέσθαι μηδὲ ἀνακάμπειν, καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐπέλθῃ ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς οὐκέτι ἐξελαύνων, διότι νῦν ἑώρακα ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς μου – and I will stand/set up at (?) my house, the height/fort of the one who does not pass through and does not return, and the one who drives away may never come upon them again, because now I have seen with my eyes.

KJV – And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

CJB – Then I will guard my house against armies, so that none will march through or return. No oppressor will ever again overrun them, for now I am watching with my own eyes.

Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton, 1851 – (LXX) And I will set up a defense for my house, that they may not pass through, nor turn back, neither shall there any more come upon them one to drive them away: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

EBC – Baldwin (*Zechariah*, p. 162) sums up 9:1-8: “The first section of this second part of the book establishes from the start two important facts: the Lord’s victory is certain, and He intends to bring back to Himself peoples long alienated from Him. These truths underlie all that follows and culminate in the universal worship of the King, the Lord of hosts, in 14:16-19.”

¹⁰⁰ What is the relationship between vs. 1-8 and vs. 9,10? Two options – 1) God’s wrath in general against all Israel’s enemies, especially the Beast of Revelation and God’s gracious love towards Israel through the entire career of the Messiah, i.e., both his first and second appearances; 2) God’s wrath against Israel’s enemies by means of Alexander the Great and God’s love for Israel by means of Jesus’ first appearance that culminated in his crucifixion that pointed towards his second appearance and the shalom he would bring in the millennial kingdom.

Not riding on a mighty steed or war-horse but on a much smaller donkey or foal (young horse), Israel’s king will arrive. Yet, he will be bringing them shalom and salvation from their enemies and from God’s wrath. In this verse, Jesus rides into Jerusalem during his first appearance. In the next verse, his second appearance brings the destruction of all implements of war in Israel for the rest of the millennial kingdom which will be characterized by pure shalom.

Four characteristics of Israel’s king –

1) Righteous/just – דִּיקָאִים / δίκαιος – morally perfect in the case of Jesus, not just a righteous sinner.

2Sam. 23:3-4 “The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, ‘He who rules over men righteously, who rules in the fear of God, is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, when the tender grass springs out of the earth, through sunshine after rain.’”

Psa. 72:1-3 Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king’s son. May he judge Your people with righteousness and Your afflicted with justice. Let the mountains bring peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

Is. 9:7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Is. 11:4-5 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.

2) He brings salvation – יְהַשֵּׁעַ (niphil participle m.s.; either passive (“having salvation”) or reflexive (“showing himself as a Savior)) / σώζων – the king acts to bring salvation to Israel, not just from their earthly enemies, but also from their sin and God’s

condemnation, i.e., through his own death as an offering to God (?)

3) Humble and gentle – חַיָּוִט = poor, afflicted / πραῦς = gentle –

Is. 53:2-3 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; he has no *stately* form or majesty that we should look upon him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Is. 53:7 He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.

Matt. 11:29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.”

4) Peaceful and bringing shalom to Israel by being mounted not on a war-horse but on a donkey or colt.

EBC – Johnson writes, “Because they will have Him at His first coming in peace, peace shall flee from them. Seeing the future discipline and chastening of the nation, He wept. Walking headlong to ruin, they shall have to learn the sad lesson that the triumphal entry was not only the story of the nation’s rejection of its King, but also of their King’s rejection of them. Yet, all is not lost. The future holds a glorious hope. The promises, unconditioned in their ultimate fulfillment, shall be realized. Israel may deny Him, crucify Him, and attempt to forget Him; but His word is inviolable. Disobedience may thwart the enjoyment of the promises, but it cannot cancel title to them or the ultimate possession of them. The day is coming, as He Himself suggested a few days later, when Israel in full understanding shall shout the acclamation again, as they see Him coming the second time for deliverance “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (cf. Matt. 23:37-39). Then shall take place the entry that is really triumphal (cf. Zech. 14:1-11). In the meantime, their house, as history has proved, is desolate.”

EBC on Kingship in the ANE – In synthesizing all the available historical data, we discover that ancient Near Eastern kingship had at least six major functions: (1) the king represented the gods before the people (his role as mediator); (2) he represented the people before the gods (his role as priest); (3) he maintained justice (his role as judge); (4) he was the commander-in-chief of the military (his role as warrior); (5) he “tended” his people, which included protection, provision, and guidance (his role as shepherd); and (6) he guaranteed *shalom* well-being and harmony—in society and nature (one of his general roles as king). Zechariah portrays the Messiah as the complete and perfect King by applying all six royal functions to him: (1) mediating Servant (3:8); (2) Priest (6:13); (3) Judge (14:16-19); (4) Warrior (10:4; 14:3-4); (5) Shepherd (11:8-9; 13:7); and (6) “Peace”—bringing King (3:10; 9:9-10).

EBC on the Kingship of Yahweh – Some passages attributing kingship to Yahweh (the LORD) are 1 Samuel 12:12; Psalms 93; 95; 99 (“theocratic psalms”); Isaiah 33:22; 43:15; Ezekiel 20:33. Regardless of mediatorial vice-regents, the Hebrew mind looked beyond the immediate mortal king to Yahweh’s kingship (cf. Isa 6:1, 5). The divine *means* of rule was the theocracy, by which chosen agents represented Yahweh and did his divine will. The *basis* of Yahweh’s kingship over Israel was their covenantal election and redemption; see Genesis 12:1-3, zenith the motifs of land (Deut 30:1-10), seed (2 Sam 7:1-16), and blessing (Jer 31:31-40).

EBC on Kingship in Israel – Davidic kings served as a reflection of Yahweh’s kingship and were typical of the ideal messianic King to come. They were divinely chosen, not elected by the nation. The relationship between the king and Yahweh was based on a personal covenant made with David and his royal progeny (2 Sam 7:12-16). The Davidic covenant established a father-son relationship between God and the king (2 Sam 7:14). This relationship was a kind of adoption, entailing discipline and direction. The ‘adoption’ of David as “son” comes to the fore in Psalm 89:26-27. Among David’s descendants will be the messianic King, who will be the accepted “Son” and a King above all kings (Ps 2:6-9). The messianic King in David’s line will represent Yahweh perfectly, for he will be a wise Ruler (“Wonderful Counselor”), a strong Ruler or divine Warrior (“Almighty God”), a fatherly Ruler (“Everlasting Father”), and a peace-bringing Ruler (“Prince of Peace”). These are his “throne names” (Isa 9:6-7). The king in Israel performed the same basic functions as ancient Near Eastern kings in general, except that he did not serve as priest. This significant lack in Davidic kingship, along with Israel’s kings’ failures even in the other functions, caused the people to look forward to one who would be the perfect, complete King and would establish the promised, ideal messianic kingdom.

¹⁰¹ Israel’s king and Messiah will bring about the destruction of all war implements because there will be complete peace for God’s people. Only shalom will reign throughout the entire earth, an extrapolation of probably what the prophet meant by “sea to sea”, etc. that was a reference to the whole ANE.

“River” is either the Nile or the Euphrates. Probably the latter.

EBC – The messianic King in David’s line **will represent Yahweh perfectly**, for he will be a wise Ruler (“Wonderful Counselor”), a strong Ruler or divine Warrior (“Almighty God”), a fatherly Ruler (“Everlasting Father”), and a peace-bringing Ruler (“Prince of Peace”). These are his “throne names” (Isa 9:6-7) [!!!].

¹⁰² The sacrificial blood that God has required in His covenant with Israel will save them from death and destruction. But this ultimately has to be the blood of the Messiah and not of bulls and goats, and the death and destruction have to be eternal and not simply temporal. This is the message of Hebrews.

EBC interprets the blood as of the Mosaic Covenant and the prisoners as the captive Jews in Babylon so that the waterless pit is their having no hope of God’s fulfilling His promise to them as long as they live outside the land of Israel.

EBC – The verse is progressively fulfilled. The initial, partial fulfillment is apparently to be found in the conflict between the Maccabees (“Zion”) and the Seleucids (“Greece”). But the final, complete fulfillment awaits the outworking of chapters 12 and 14 and 9:16-17. The point of the verse is that God’s people will gain the victory over their enemies.

¹⁰³ Two options – 1) God will strengthen the Jews after the invasion of Alexander the Great to hold the Seleucids off from conquering them; 2) God will use the Jews, the 144,000 of Revelation or the resurrected and raptured Jews/Gentiles, to assist the Messiah when he returns to defeat the Beast of Revelation and his armies.

¹⁰⁴ Again two options – 1) God’s presence when the Jews defeat the Seleucids will be like that at Mt. Sinai in Exodus 19; 2) God’s presence when Jesus returns will involve celestial signs and the sound of a trumpet to defeat the Jews’ enemies. EBC interprets the trumpet as thunder in line with Exodus 19.

¹⁰⁵ God will defend the Jews so that they will be victorious over their enemies who have been trying to destroy them. They will be covered with the blood of their enemies like an altar with its sacrificial animal. The Jews will sacrifice their enemies to God as they defeat them.

EBC considers this a reference to the beginning of the Messianic age. But then why put the previous verses at the time of the Maccabees and the Seleucids.

EBC and from *The Illustrated Family Encyclopedia* – The sling was a long-range weapon, like the bow. Hence, in battle the units of slingers and archers were generally positioned side by side. The Dead Sea Scroll of “The War of the Sons of the Light Against The Sons of Darkness” also mentions “standards of slingers,” each of the soldiers grouped beneath which was armed with seven slingstones (column 5, lines 1-2). The way in which the slinger operated his sling is well illustrated on the reliefs of Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.) portraying the capture of Lachish ... The artist has drawn the slingers in the act of hurling their slingstones, each with a pile of reserve ammunition at his feet. This weapon was a menace not only to the defenders who fought from the top of the wall to a besieged city, but also to the inhabitants inside, since its high trajectory made it possible for stones to be shot over the wall into the city’s streets.

¹⁰⁶ “That day” must The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord when God destroys both Israel’s enemies, the Beast of Revelation, as well as any unbelieving Jew, leaving the 144,000 of Revelation as the saved ones on the land of Israel. And this is because the Jews are like precious stones in the crown of a king, and God will preserve these precious and valuable stones for the millennial kingdom. The Jews as precious stones is in contrast to the slingstones that their enemies attempted to use against them.

¹⁰⁷ Israel will prosper and flourish when God brings about this glorious future for them. This reference adds to the evidence that this whole paragraph is about the millennial kingdom and not the Maccabees and Seleucids—in spite of the similarities.

¹⁰⁸ All the Jews will have to do is pray for rain at the right time for their crops to grow and be successful, and God will readily respond and provide them with exactly what they need.

EBC – This verse probably contains a veiled polemic against Baal and Baalism, as do Jeremiah 14:22 and Amos 5:8 (see further Barker, “Value of Ugaritic,” pp. 120-23). Yahweh, not Baal, is the one who controls the weather and the rain, giving life and fertility to the land. Therefore the people of God are to pray to him and trust in him. Some scholars regard the spring rains as literal; others understand them as spiritual and typical. Perhaps both are in view, the literal rains being also typical of spiritual refreshment. Certainly in the grand consummation of the Messianic Era, both the physical and spiritual realms will flourish (cf. Isa 55:10-12; Hos 6:3; Joel 2:21-32).

¹⁰⁹ I wonder if the teraphim are a reference to Jewish leaders such as the Sanhedrin in Jesus’ day who are misleading the people while claiming to be authentic Bible students. Thus, the people of Israel are wandering like sheep without a shepherd because no one is guiding them with truth!

שֹׁמְרֵי אֱלֹהִים = idols (?) or those who speak as translated in the LXX, i.e., those who speak falsely, either prophets who claim to speak for God, or actually idols whom the people think are speaking, but they are speaking lies; οἱ ἀποφθεγγόμενοι = those who make utterances, who utter, who speak.

EBC – Although “shepherd” can refer to any leader, it is primarily a royal motif, whether referring to human kings (Isa 44:28; Jer 23:2-4), to the divine King (Pss 23:1, 100:3) or to the messianic Davidic King (Ezek 34:23-24). “Shepherd” was a familiar metaphor in the ancient Near Eastern world; e.g., in the Prologue to the Code of Hammurabi, Hammurabi describes himself as “the shepherd, called by Enlil, ... the one who makes affluence and plenty abound” (ANET, p. 164).

¹¹⁰ God will judge and condemn the false teachers of Israel but then make the Jews great like a warhorse. Thus, He will care for His people Himself and not rely on the sinful leaders to do so. Is the warhorse analogy a reference to the Jews actually fighting against and defeating their earthly enemies? It would be in line with 9:11-15.

¹¹¹ Two options – 1) From the replacement shepherd will come all these benefits to Israel—the foundational establishing of the nation, the anchor for the nation, the fight against and defeat Israel’s enemies, all those who rule over Israel, i.e., resurrected and raptured believers who are transformed into morally perfect and immortal beings; 2) From Israel, indeed from Judah (literally “him”), God will bring forth the one who will be the anchor for the Jews. Who else could this be but the Messiah? Right? Specifically coming from the house of Judah. Indeed, “every ruler” (plural) will come from Judah. But is the plural hyperbole to refer to the majesty of the Messiah, to Jesus himself?

#1 is the better option, even in line with the LXX.

EBC – Verse 4 is variously interpreted. Those commentators are probably correct who with the Targum, take it as messianic (the pronoun “him” referring to Judah, as in NIV). So understood, the Messiah will come from Judah (cf. Gen 49:10; her 30:21). He is called (1) “the cornerstone” (cf. comment at 3:9; cf. also esp. Ps 118:22, Isa 28:16); (2) “the tent peg,” a figure of a ruler as the support of the state (so BDB p. 450; cf. Isa 22:23-24; and (3) “the battle bow,” part of the divine Warrior terminology (cf. Ps 45:5; Rev 19:11-16). From Judah will also come “every” divinely sanctioned king and ultimately the Messiah. Although the Hebrew *noges* (“ruler”) is used pejoratively in 9:8, it seems best to agree with BDB (p. 620) that here it is used in a good sense.

¹¹² The result of God’s getting rid of the bad teachers of Israel will be that the one who will be the teacher of truth will allow them to fight for God and to defeat their enemies, the “infantry” of the Jews being more powerful than the “cavalry” of their enemies, because also God will be with them. Against superior forces, the Jews will defeat their enemies.

Two options – 1) Resurrected and raptured Jewish and Gentile believers who return with Jesus and defeat the Beast of Revelation with him as in Revelation 19, or 2) The 144,000 of Revelation who fight with Jesus and “the armies which are in heaven” to defeat the Beast.

EBC – The Lord promises to make Israel mighty and to reunite and restore the nation, causing the people to rejoice in him. Judah (v.4)—i.e., its people—is probably the antecedent of “they” (v.5). In the context “mighty men” has a military connotation: “valiant warriors.” “Because” introduces the reason for their victory: supernatural help (“the LORD is with them”; cf. Josh 1:5; Jer 1:8). Because of divine aid the infantry overcomes the cavalry (a symbol of power). God’s people win against superior odds. Although the final, complete fulfillment doubtless lies in the future, perhaps the first stage in the progressive fulfillment of the passage is to be found in the Maccabean victories.

¹¹³ Thus, God will have compassion on Israel in the future and will make them great in fulfillment of His promise to Abraham in Genesis 12. And the people of Israel will rejoice in God and never fear their enemies again.

- 1) God will save the Jews from their enemies.
- 2) God will gather the exiled Jews, wherever they are, and bring them back to the land of Israel.
- 3) God will have compassion on them and treat them as if they had never been estranged from Him. And He will answer their prayers instead of ignoring them, thus implying their hearts will be changed into of hard and stubborn, even in their “orthodoxy.”
- 4) Northern Israel, Ephraim, will be as strong as southern Israel, Judah, implying that God will unite all the Jews.
- 5) Joy of their God and His salvation will fill their hearts, from the adults who could become glad from drinking wine to their children. Everyone will rejoice in God!!!

EBC – nothing additional.

¹¹⁴ Once again, God says that He will gather them back into the land of Israel from where He had scattered them—into the millennial kingdom. And this is because He has “redeemed” them, bought them out of slavery from their sin and the eternal consequences of His judgment and condemnation in order to fulfill His promise to Abraham. And God will multiply them and make them prosperous on the land.

וְגַבְרֵי יְהוָה = and I will gather; εἰσδέξομαι αὐτούς = I will welcome them

¹¹⁵ cf. Deuteronomy 30, etc.

וְשָׁבוּ = and they will return; καὶ ἐπιστρέψουσιν = and they will return

EBC – Kaiser – Yet even after Israel had been restored to the land after the Babylonian exile, the prospect of a regathered, reunified nation still appeared in Zechariah 10:9-12. The importance of this passage and its late postexilic date should not be lost by those who interpret the promise of the land spiritually or as a temporal blessing which has since been forfeited by a rebellious nation due to her failure to keep her part of the conditional (?) covenant. On the contrary, this hope burned brighter as Israel became more and more hopelessly scattered.

¹¹⁶ The Jews’ greatness will also be in the growth of their population on the land of Israel from the returning people from the various Gentile nations where God has previously scattered them.

Notice the chiasm in vs. 10-11 of Egypt...Assyria...Assyria...Egypt.

EBC – These two ancient oppressors of God’s chosen people are probably intended to represent all the countries where the Israelites are dispersed. They evoke memories of slavery and exile. The promise of regathering (v.10) is similar to that in Isaiah 11:11-16 (note “a second time” in Isa 11:11; Ezek 39:27-29). “Gilead” lies east of the Jordan and “Lebanon” west of the Jordan—both in the territory of the old northern kingdom... On the statement that “there will not be room enough for them” (v.10), see v.8 and Isaiah 49:19-21; 54:2-3. Obstacles will be no barrier (v.11). The people “will pass through the sea of trouble” (v.11)—as at the Red Sea, or Sea of Reeds. The “scepter” (i.e., “rule”) of other great powers over them will cease. If the Ephraimites (northern kingdom) are still in view (see v.7), God is promising in v.12 to do the same for them as he did for Judah (v.6), namely, strengthen them. The source of the strength is the Lord himself (“in the LORD”). Walking “in his name” is probable here equivalent to serving “as his representatives or ambassadors,” though it may also mean that they will live “in keeping with his revealed character”—by divine enablement, of course.

¹¹⁷ The sea of distress is probably the lands where the Jews have been mistreated. But in the future, when God will gather them back into the land of Israel, they will pass through those lands in triumph and without any threat of their being harmed to reach their final destination of Israel. The lands have the potential to distress them and have distressed them in the past. But when God fulfills His promise to them, the Jews will see the lands simply as passageways to the land of Israel, their home.

¹¹⁸ God declares that He will grant them to live powerfully spiritually “in Him,” i.e., in the context of His grace, mercy, and forgiveness. And they will live their lives according to what He has purposed for those who believe in Him and obey Him as sinners.

¹¹⁹ Two options – 1) The conclusion of the previous section and the destruction of surrounding lands of Israel, or 2) The introduction of the next section and the destruction of Israel itself for their rejection of the Messiah, i.e., Jesus, where the names and listing of natural resources of the surrounding lands refer to those things which the Israelites have used to build their kingdoms which are now going to crumble under the weight of the judgment of God. As the EBC argues below, #2 seems more reasonable.

EBC – This little poem is beset with problems. For example, is it the conclusion of the previous section or a poetic introduction to the following section? Quite obviously the answer depends, in part at least, on one’s interpretation of the piece. Some interpret it as a taunt song describing the lament over the destruction of the nations’ power and arrogance (ch. 10), represented by the cedar, the pine, and the oak (vv.1-2). Their kings are represented by the shepherds and the lions (v.3). So understood, vv.1-3 provide the conclusion for the preceding section. Others, however, without denying the presence of figurative language, interpret the piece more literally as a description of the devastation of Syro-Palestine due to the rejection of the Messiah and Good

Shepherd (vv.4-149. Verses 1-3 would then introduce the next section. The names in the text—Lebanon, Bashan, and Jordan—seem to favor this approach. Part of the fulfillment would be the destruction and further subjugation of that whole area by the Romans, including the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 under Emperor Vespasian and General Titus, as well as the later fall of Masada. This action quelled one of several Jewish rebellions against Rome. Understood this way, the passage is in sharp contrast with what has just preceded in chapter 10, with its prediction of Israel’s full deliverance and restoration to the covenant land. Now the scene is one of desolation for the land (vv.1-3), followed by the threat of judgment and disaster for both land and people (vv.4-6).

EBC – The picture that now unfolds is very vivid and graphic “in words arranged with great rhetorical power, full of poetic imagery and lively dramatic movement” (Chambers, CHS, 14:83). Unger (*Zechariah*, p. 188) says: “One can feel the severity of the judgment visited upon the land (and inevitably upon the people also) which prepares the reader for the description of the heinous crime of Israel that provoked such severe visitation of wrath.” Apostrophe (e.g., “open,” v.1) and personification (e.g., “Wail,” v.2) are among the figures of speech used.

EBC – Lebanon (cf. 10:10) was famous for its cedars (v.1), but they will be consumed. In the Talmud the Jewish rabbis identified Lebanon here with the second temple, “which was built with cedars from Lebanon, towering aloft upon a strong summit—the spiritual glory and eminence of Jerusalem, as the Lebanon was of the whole country” (Baron, pp. 378-79, esp. n. 2, where the reference in the Talmud is given). 1 Kings 6:15-18 and 2 Chronicles 2:8-9 may support such an interpretation of “Lebanon.” The royal palace in Jerusalem was definitely referred to as “Lebanon” in Jeremiah 22:23 (see 1 Kings 7:2). But whether literal or figurative, the passage announces a judgment that would embrace both people and land, including Jerusalem and the temple. The pines and the oaks are to wail (v.2); for if the cedars do not survive the coming destruction, neither will they.

EBC – Bashan lay east of the Jordan and north of Mount Gilead. The Israelites took it from the Amorite king, Og, at the time of the conquest of Canaan (Num 21:32-35). It was allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Num 32:33; Josh 13:30; 17:5). Bashan was renowned for its rich pastures and abundance of choice cattle (Deut 32:14, Ezek 39:18). The oaks of Bashan are to wail because the dense (or, perhaps better, “inaccessible”) forest of Lebanon (vv.1-2a) has been felled. How, then, can the lesser and more accessible trees escape?

EBC – If v.3 is figurative, the shepherds and the lions would represent the rulers or leaders of the Jews (cf. v.5 and 10:3). The language is strikingly similar to Jeremiah 25:34-38. The Hebrew text is marked by an abbreviated literary style and elliptical construction (e.g., “Listen—the wail of the shepherds!”), as well as by the emphatic repetition of “Listen” and “destroyed” (though NIV has “ruined” for the second occurrence of the same Hebrew word); see also the repetition of “Wail” in v.2. The shepherds are wailing because the coming destruction will leave no pasture land for their flocks. Similarly, the lions are roaring because their lairs and food are gone again because of the coming destruction.

¹²⁰ This paragraph addresses mainly the “shepherds” of the people of Israel. Their leaders are misleading them and the direction they are all going is towards God’s judgment and destruction so that those ruling over the people and the land will destroy them. The Romans? The Beast of Revelation? Probably the former if the ongoing subject is the rejection of the Messiah.

Two options for the speaker in vs. 4-14 – 1) Zechariah, or 2) Jesus the Messiah.

First, God directs Zechariah/Jesus to lead His people who are a doomed flock of sheep because He will eventually judge them and cause their rulers and oppressors (the Romans or the Beast of Revelation – probably the former) to destroy the land and them.

¹²¹ This sounds like the Jewish leadership of Jesus’ day who are selling the people of Israel for their own self-enrichment as they collaborate with the Roman rulers.

EBC regarding vs. 4-5 – The reason for the calamity in vv.1-3 is now given, namely, the people’s rejection of the messianic Shepherd-King (vv.4-14). Just as the Servant in the Servant Songs (found basically in Isa 42; 49; 50; 53) is rejected, so here the Good Shepherd (a royal figure) is rejected. The same messianic King is in view in both instances. The purpose of this section, then, is to dramatize the rejection of the coming messianic Shepherd-King and the resulting rejection of Israel, ending in their judgment. “My God” (v.4) indicates Zechariah’s personal, intimate relationship with the Lord. What follows is addressed to him. Evidently he is instructed to act out the role of a good shepherd for the flock, i.e., Israel. With this Cashdan (p. 314) agrees: “The prophet is directed by God to act the role of a shepherd (ruler) to the flock (Israel), since the earlier shepherds neglected the flock and led them to the brink of disaster. He thereupon enacts the part of a good shepherd, tending his flock with gentleness and loving care, but his efforts are spurned and in despair he leaves them to their fate ... Kimchi regards the prophecy as Messianic.” The “slaughter” spoken of is explained in v.5, where the sheep (the Jews) are bought as slaves by outsiders. At least part of the fulfillment came in A.D. 70 and after. The sellers are their own shepherds—bad rulers or leaders.

¹²² God will cause Israel’s “king” to kill the people of Israel. The Roman Emperor and A.D. 70 and 132-135?

EBC – “For” [כִּי] introduces the reason for the misery described in v.5, namely, the Lord’s displeasure. The verse also interprets the parable of the flock. The “land” (not “earth”) is Palestine. While the fulfillment may have been partially realized during the intertestamental period, it also seems to reach to Roman times; so one example of “king” would perhaps be the Roman emperor (cf. John 19:15), and those who “oppress the land” would include the Romans.

¹²³ Zechariah or Jesus is speaking here. He chose to carry out the responsibility God has given to him to shepherd the Israel of his day.

¹²⁴ This special shepherd takes two staves that are symbolic of Israel’s beauty and harmony or allotment of land before God. Harmony seems to be the better interpretation based on 11:14 where breaking staff is symbolic of destroying “the brotherhood between Judah and Israel,” implying that it will be like the split between the northern and southern tribes when Rehoboam became king after Solomon. How he treated his fellow Jews and their splitting away from him gets replayed in Israel’s future when they experience poor leadership and disobey God as a result.

מִטְּבֵּל = rod, branch, staff of a shepherd; ῥάβδος = rod, staff, stick (of a shepherd)

לְנֵם = loveliness, beauty, kindness; κάλλος = beauty

חֶסֶד = harmony; σχοίνισμα = allotment, a piece of land measured out by means of a measuring-line; the amount of something allocated to a particular person

¹²⁵ At this point in the text, something goes terribly wrong between the good shepherd and the flock so that he destroys three other shepherds and leaves the flock to die, be destroyed, and even eat one another's flesh.

If this is Zechariah, then these three "shepherds" would be leaders of Israel in his day. But did he really kill three contemporary Jewish rulers or leaders. Or is this symbolic of God's destroying completely the Jewish leadership of Jesus' day up to the time of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of most the people in A.D. 132-135.

EBC – Since so many interpretations have been given to the first part of v.8 (forty by one count), obviously no certainty is possible. "In one month" has been taken to refer to (1) a literal month, (2) a short period of time, and (3) a longer period of indefinite duration. One's conclusion on this matter will depend on his identification of "the three shepherds." Four of the more popular interpretations are (1) Eleazar, John, and Simon (the leaders of the three Jewish factions during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70; see Baron, p. 396, n. 1); (2) Seleucus IV, Heliodorus, and Demetrius Soter (three Seleucid kings; see Mitchell, p. 307); (3) Jason, Menelaus, and Alcimus (high priests; see Ellis, p. 1045); and (4) three classes of leaders, such as prophet, priest, and king (or a lesser civil authority). This much is certain: The Good Shepherd will dispose of unfit leaders. Baldwin (Zechariah, p. 183) raises an interesting question: "Is the number three used in that way [symbolically] here ... to signify completion? If so, the good shepherd would be removing from power all the unworthy leaders who frustrated his work."

וְנִסְּתִי = and I destroyed; ἐξαρῶ = removed, lifted out

¹²⁶ This sounds like the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 when the people resorted to cannibalism to stay alive, thus making the speaker the Messiah and not Zechariah.

EBC – In spite of the ideal ministry of the Good Shepherd, the flock as a whole detested him. Similarly, he grew weary of them. (See the analogous reaction of God in Isa 1:13-14: "I cannot bear your evil assemblies ... your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them." Here Zechariah continues to be a type of the messianic Good Shepherd-King). In v.9 the Good Shepherd terminates his providential care of the sheep, so that they even "eat one another's flesh." According to Josephus, this actually happened during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Romans (Jos. War VI, 193 213 [iii.3-4]). Baldwin (Zechariah, p. 184) remarks: "By withholding his leadership the shepherd abandoned the people to the consequences of their rejection of him: death, and mutual destruction. He simply let things take their course."

¹²⁷

Cf. Daniel 9:27 "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

וְשָׁבַרְתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר כָּתַבְתִּי אֶת-כָּל-הָעַמִּים = to break my covenant which I cut with all the peoples; τοῦ διασκεδάσαι τὴν διαθήκην μου, ἣν διεθέμην πρὸς πάντας τοὺς λαοὺς = to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples

¹²⁸

EBC – A further consequence of the Shepherd's rejection is the cessation of his gracious favor. One indication of this is the revocation of his covenant of security and restraint, by which he had been apparently holding back the nations from his people (cf. Ezek 34:25; Hos 2:18). Now, however, the nations (e.g., the Romans [or the Beast of Revelation?]) will be permitted to overrun them. Ellis (p. 1045) is probably correct in identifying "the afflicted of the flock" (v.11) with "the faithful few who recognize the word of the Lord, who know true authority when they see it in action." See also v.7, where the same Hebrew phrase is rendered "the oppressed of the flock." The last "it" in v.11 evidently refers to Israel's affliction by the nations. At least part of the fulfillment of these verses is to be found in Matthew 23 (note particularly vv.13, 23-24, 33-39). Faithful believers discern that what happens (e.g., the judgment on Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70) is a fulfillment of God's prophetic word—a result of such actions as those denounced in Matthew 23, which led to the rejection of the Good Shepherd.

¹²⁹ This is the good shepherd who is speaking and demanding his wages for shepherding Israel, while also he is allowing for the fact that they may refuse to pay him. Nevertheless, they do pay him—thirty shekels of silver, the same amount that the Sanhedrin paid Judas Iscariot for betraying Jesus.

¹³⁰

וְיָצַרְתִּי = potter, or creator and maker, from יָצַר = form, fashion; LXX – κάθευ αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον = drop them into the smelting furnace

EBC – Perowne (p. 127) has this summary: "Like the earlier prophecy of the King (ix. 9), the prophecy of the Shepherd is remarkable for its literal fulfillment. The 'thirty pieces of silver' were literally the 'goodly price' paid for Him, 'whom they of the children of Israel did value.' 'The potter' was literally the recipient of it, as the purchase money of his exhausted field for an unclean purpose (Matt. xxvii. 5-10)."

¹³¹ First the good shepherd had broken his "covenant" with the Jews, and now the nation is broken into separate pieces before they will be put back together again and God renews His covenant with them when Jesus returns.

EBC – Chambers (p. 86) rightly says: "The breaking up of the nation into parties bitterly hostile to each other, was one of the most marked peculiarities of the later Jewish history, and greatly accelerated the ruin of the popular cause in the Roman war."

Weinberg (p. 211) has this observation:

¹³² God is addressing the same person as in 11:4-14. God wants him to adopt the equipment of someone who misleads the people of Israel. The two options above for this person were 1) Zechariah, 2) Jesus. But Jesus seems less likely here, that God would has

him to take up the equipment of a foolish shepherd, unless this is completely pretend. And this person is pretending to be... Options for the foolish shepherd – 1) Someone in Zechariah’s day, a priest. 2) Eventually someone in Jesus’ day or thereabouts – Simon bar Kochba for example. 3) Eventually someone just before Jesus’ return, e.g., a combination of the two beasts of Revelation, one from the sea, a Gentile, and one from the land, a Jew.

EBC – Zechariah acted out the role of such a bad shepherd, thus signifying that a selfish, corrupt, and greedy leader would arise and afflict the flock—the people of Israel. So the first oracle of Part II ends on a note of sorrow. “Again” (v.15) doubtless refers to v.7, where Zechariah took two shepherd’s staves as the equipment of the Good Shepherd. The “equipment” would also include a bag for food, a pipe or reed for calling the sheep, a knife, and a case for setting and binding up broken bones. The bad shepherd is here characterized as “foolish,” a word denoting “one who is morally deficient” (NIV mg. to Prov 1:7).

¹³³ The future worthless shepherd and leader of the Jewish people will be disfigured—literally or metaphorically? At least the latter by virtue of his foolish ideas and complete lack of wisdom and obedience of God.

EBC – While this counterfeit shepherd may have found a partial, historical fulfillment in such leaders as Bar Kokhba, who led the Jewish revolt against the Romans in A.D. 132–35 and was hailed as the Messiah by Rabbi Akiba, it seems that the final stage of the progressive fulfillment of the complete prophecy awaits the rise of the final Antichrist (cf. Ezek 34:2-4, Dan 11:36-39; John 5:43; 2 Thess 2:3-10; Rev 13:1-8). The imprecation calls for his power (“arm”) to be paralyzed (“completely withered”) and his intelligence (“right eye”) to be frustrated or nullified (“totally blinded”). For the fulfillment with respect to the Antichrist or “beast,” see Revelation 19:19-21; 20:10. “With arm and right eye out of action the leader will be powerless to fight, or even to take aim, against his enemies” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 187). Feinberg (pp. 213-14) concludes the first oracle and introduces the second: “The judgment here (vs. 17) brings to a close the cycle of prophecy which began with judgment (9:1). Judgment has gone from the circumference (the nations) to the center (Israel); Zechariah will yet reveal that in blessing the direction will be from the center (Israel) to the circumference (the nations) as in chapter 14.”

¹³⁴ Why “burden”? Maybe Zechariah’s grasping it and passing it on to his contemporaries in Jerusalem.

Cf. *Zechariah* 9:1 The burden of the word of Yahweh is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward Yahweh),

EBC – Zechariah next encouraged God’s covenant people by contrasting initial judgment on them with their ultimate deliverance, restoration, and blessing. “In [or ‘on’] that day” appears sixteen times in the second oracle, placing it, for the most part, in the eschaton. The oracle basically revolves around two scenes: the final siege of Jerusalem and the Messiah’s return to defeat Israel’s enemies and to establish his kingdom fully. Feinberg (p. 218) sets the stage for this last section of the book: “Says Dods ‘It is obvious that from the beginning of the twelfth chapter to the end of the book it is one period that is described.’ In these chapters the city of Jerusalem holds a prominent place ... The Tetragrammaton is found with marked frequency ... The nations of the earth ... play a major role in the events set forth.”

נָשָׂא = carrying, load, lifting up (? , from נָשָׂא); לָהֶמְמָא = gain, from λαμβάνω = to get hold of something by laying hands on it

¹³⁵ Zechariah describes God in terms of His being the transcendent Creator, of both the overall cosmos and each human being in the story of God’s revealing His glory through His grace, mercy, and justice—and therefore the Author of all reality at every moment of the existence of the creation.

EBC – It is surprising to be informed that the oracle concerns “Israel” instead of “Judah and Jerusalem,” but it is clear that in chapters 12-14 “Israel” means the whole nation, not just the northern kingdom. The oracle begins by describing the Lord’s creative power in the heavens, on the earth, and in man (Gen 2:7). He is “able therefore to accomplish what He predicts” (Perowne, p. 128). Perhaps this description is also a means of strengthening the royal and sovereign authority of the message (see comment on “the word of the LORD came” at 1:1).

¹³⁶ Two options – 1) siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Romans, or 2) the judgment of the Jews and the land of Israel just before Jesus returns and led by the Beast of Revelation. In the context of 12:4ff., #2 makes more sense.

When Jerusalem is besieged, so will the rest of the Jews. It will not be just the city that is affected, but also the nation.

Rev. 17:1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth [land?] were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.”

Rev. 18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. 2 And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. 3 “For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.”

Rev. 18:9 “And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, 10 standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’

¹³⁷ *Rev. 16:12* The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 15 (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.”) 16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

EBC – Jerusalem is pictured as a cup “round which all nations gather, eager to swallow down its inviting contents” (Perowne, p.

129). But as they drink from her, they become intoxicated and reel. The end of v.2 indicates that the siege of Jerusalem will obviously affect Judah as well. In v.3 Jerusalem is compared to a heavy, “immovable rock” that the nations attempt to move but only hurt themselves in the process. This, of course, will be due to special divine intervention and protection (vv.4-5). On the invasion of Jerusalem (v.3), “when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her,” see also 14:2; Joel 3:9-16; Revelation 16:16-21.

¹³⁸ Assuming option #2 above, the judgment of the Jews and the land of Israel just before Jesus returns and led by the Beast of Revelation, then this is the same as Revelation 19 when Jesus returns to establish the millennial kingdom. Thus, God is describing the destruction of the invading army of the Beast and His protection of the 144,000 who will be the first generation of the kingdom.

EBC – In Deuteronomy 28:28, “panic [or ‘confusion of mind’],” “madness,” and “blindness” (v.4) are listed among Israel’s curses for disobeying the stipulations of the covenant. Now these curses are turned against Israel’s enemies. Special emphasis is laid on the horses to exalt God’s power. On God’s “watchful eye” over his people, see Psalms 32:8 and 33:18.

¹³⁹ The rest of the Jews will recognize the role that the 144,000 play in assisting God by fighting for Him against the invading armies. This will be in the midst of His protecting them too.

EBC – Feinberg (p. 223) observes: “In the same hour that God blinds the eyes of Israel’s enemies [actually their horses], He will open His own upon the house of Judah in love and compassion to protect them.” For the literal meaning of the Hebrew for “leaders” (v.5), see comment at 9:7. These wise leaders discern that the source of the people’s strength is their God, the Lord Almighty.

¹⁴⁰ To repeat, the Jews will act as God’s weapons of vengeance against their enemies. And will involve more than just the inhabitants of Jerusalem. It will be all of Judah, indeed, all the Israel probably with “the clans [chiefs, leaders] of Judah” representing all the Jews.

EBC – In v.6 these faithful leaders are compared to a fire destroying wood and sheaves of grain; thus will they consume their enemies (cf. Judg 15:3-5). By contrast Jerusalem and her people “will remain intact in her place.

¹⁴¹ God will protect the Jews surrounding Jerusalem so that the families in Jerusalem, who present the Davidic line because they live in the capital where the king resides and rules, will not seem to hold a position of being God’s favorite.

EBC – “The Lord will deliver the defenseless country before the fortified and well-defended capital, so that both may realize that the victory is of the Lord” (Feinberg, p. 225). For the principle of v.7, see Jeremiah 9:23-24; 1 Corinthians 1:29, 31; 12:22-26; 2 Corinthians 10:17.

¹⁴² Reference perhaps to Jesus, that he represents the “house of David” and it will be victorious over Israel’s enemies, because Jesus will act like the *angelos* of Yahweh since he is the icon of Yahweh. And the Jews who will fight against their enemies will be as strong as Yahweh and His Messiah in overcoming and defeating them.

¹⁴³ Indeed, God will destroy all the nations who ally themselves with Beast of Revelation.

EBC – Ultimately the Lord is the one who does the saving (v.7), the shielding or protecting (v.8), and the destroying of enemies (v.9). He will make the “feeblest” (lit., “the one who stumbles”) among them like David (v.8), who was celebrated as a great warrior. And the members of the Davidic dynasty will be “like God,” which, in turn, is explained as being “like the Angel of the LORD going before them.” God will be with them, will go before them, and will give them supernatural strength (cf. 4:6; and for the “Angel” motif referred to here, see Exod 14:19; 23:20; 32:34; 33:2, 14-15, 22). Perowne (p. 132) interacts with Wright’s interpretation of the verse: It is true, as Mr. Wright points out, that in the only other passage in which this phrase [“I will set out,” lit., “I will seek”] is used of Almighty God, the intention, though “manifested clearly and distinctly,” was abandoned (Exod. iv. 24). But it does not follow that “this passage is not an absolute promise of the utter destruction of the nations,” but only a promise conditional upon the future conduct of the Jews. The passage as a whole is quite against such a supposition. The verse would be a strange anti-climax, if after such promises as are contained in ver. 2-8 it only asserted, “My aim shall be to do all this that I have promised in glowing terms; but all may be frustrated and come to nought through the unfaithfulness of man.”

¹⁴⁴ Finally, the Jews will acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah and will lament their having put him to death because they thought he was a false prophet, etc. And they will mourn their sin besides, supplicating God for forgiveness, as if they were mourning the loss of their firstborn son. Plus, their response to Jesus will be because God will change their hearts through His Spirit.

וַיִּשְׁׁרְפוּ אֵלַי = and they will look (hiphil) to me; καὶ ἐπιβλέψονται πρὸς με = and they will look to me

וַיִּשְׁׁרְפוּ (2x) = on/over him

EBC – The most common meaning of the Hebrew preposition translated “on” is “to” (NIV mg.), and there is no good contextual reason to depart from it here. The emphasis, then, is not on looking “on” (or “at”) the Messiah literally but on looking “to” the Messiah in faith (cf. Num 21:9; Isa 45:22; John 3:14-15). According to some premillennialists, this will take place at the second coming of the Messiah (Christ) to the earth. According to others, it will happen just prior to his second advent. The object of the people’s look of faith is identified as “the one they have pierced” (cf. Isa 53:5; John 19:34). John 19:37, which quotes this part of the verse, is but a stage in the progressive fulfillment of the whole. The final, complete fulfillment is yet future for Israel (Rom 11:25-27). Evidently the prospect of a “pierced” Messiah was such a stumbling block to the Jews that, according to C.C. Torrey (“The Messiah Son of Ephraim,” JBL 66 [1947]: 273), the Babylonian Talmud (*Sukkah* 52a) presents two Messiahs; the one here in v.10 is identified as the Messiah son of Joseph.

¹⁴⁵ The Jews in Jerusalem, and therefore in the rest of the land of Israel, all the 144,000, will mourn over the death of the Messiah and its significance, i.e., the salvation of their sins, which they are mourning also.

EBC – The future weeping (“on that day”) in Jerusalem will be so great that it is compared with “the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in ‘the plain of Megiddo’... The present writer, however, prefers to take Hadad-Rimmon as a place name (containing the names

of ancient Semitic fertility gods) near Megiddo. So understood, the simile in v.11 refers to the people of this town mourning the death of King Josiah (2 Chronicles 35:20-27; see v.22 there for the plain of Megiddo and vv.24 for the mourning).

¹⁴⁶ The idea is that everyone in Israel, every Jew, man, woman, and child will mourn over their sin and the death of that their ancestors brought about of the Messiah.

לְבָדִי מִשְׁפָּחוֹת מִשְׁפָּחוֹת – families of families alone; κατὰ φυλὰς φυλὰς = according to tribes tribes

¹⁴⁷ All the remaining Jews, the 144,000 of Revelation, will mourn their sin and repent in the midst of their becoming the first generation of the millennial kingdom. And this will be according to the work of God’s grace through His Spirit (v. 10).

EBC – The mourning includes the royal house of David and the family of his son Nathan (2 Sam 5:14), also the house of Levi and the family of Shimei son of Gershon, the son of Levi (Num 3:17-18, 21), as well as “all the rest” (v.14). While the repentance is led by the civil (royal) and religious leaders, it extends to every clan in the nation. Isaiah 53:1-9 could well be their confession on the great occasion. Such true repentance, of course, “remains a gift of God’s Spirit (verse 10)” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 194); and, in keeping with his covenantal promise, he will bestow that gift.

¹⁴⁸ This fountain could be one of water as symbolic of moral cleansing or of blood in the same manner. Certainly the Bible speaks of the cleansing of sin by Jesus’ blood, but the language may refer to something simpler, just a water fountain as that produces an image of cleaning the body, i.e., sin, also. Thus, God will forgive the sins of the remaining Jews, and we know that it will be on the basis of Jesus’ shed blood when he died to qualify to become their high priest and to intercede on their behalf.

EBC is not of much help here.

¹⁴⁹ And the remaining Jews who are changed will never again worship false gods, including the false gods of materialism, prosperity, success, deception, and atheism, i.e., themselves, the main idol of the modern world—if Jesus were to come soon.

¹⁵⁰ This, I think, is strictly hypothetical, as it must be if all this refers to the millennial kingdom. Thus, God says this strictly as a hypothetical situation to demonstrate how serious He is about sin among the Jews in the millennial kingdom—that the Jews will worship Him and Him alone.

EBC is not much help here.

¹⁵¹ This is a description of the Jews who might begin to think that they understand the nature of reality apart from the Bible. They will stop themselves and say that they know nothing apart from what God really does teach them. If this is during the time of the millennial kingdom after Jesus’ return, then these wounds are likewise hypothetical or metaphorical, i.e., a reference to being wounded in spirit or mind by sinful Jews who might begin to think that they should say something in Israel that is contrary to truth.

EBC – Because of these stern measures, a false prophet will be reticent in identifying himself as such and will be evasive in responding to questioning. To help conceal his true identity, he will not wear “a prophet’s garment of hair” (v.4), such as Elijah wore (2 Kings 1:8). Instead, to avoid the death penalty (v.3), he will deny being a prophet and will claim to have been a farmer from his youth (v.5). And if some suspicious person notices marks on his body and inquires about them (v.6), he will claim he received them in a scuffle with friends as discipline from his parents during childhood. Apparently the accuser suspects that the false prophet’s wounds were self-inflicted to arouse his prophetic ecstasy in idolatrous rites (as in 1 Kings 18:28; cf. also Lev 19:28; 21:5; Deut 14:1; Jer 16:6; 41:5; 48:37).

EBC – A few expositors assign a messianic sense to v.6 (cf. Unger, *Zechariah*, pp. 22830, for the best defense of such a position, though most of his arguments here are weak, forced, irrelevant, or debatable). The following observations, however, militate against any messianic import for the verse: (1) it presupposes an unnatural break between v.5 and v.6, with a complete change in subject matter; (2) in order to find a proper antecedent for “him,” it reverts all the way back to 12:10, thus regarding 12:11-13:5 as parenthetical, which is neither obvious nor necessary; (3) the most natural antecedent for “him” (v.6) is “he” (v.5), since *weamar* (“if someone asks”) at the beginning of v.6 certainly seems to be a response to *weamar* (“he will say”) at the beginning of v.5; (4) there is a rather clear change in subject matter in v.7, indicating that the break is between v.6 and v.7, not between v.5 and v.6; (5) there is a change of person in v.7, indicating the same; (6) the verb changes to imperative in v.7, indicating the same; and (7) the literary form changes to poetry in v.7, indicating the same.

¹⁵² Prediction by God of the death of the Good Shepherd, Jesus, will result in the scattering of the people of Israel for their rejecting him. God will judge His people until He chooses to fulfill His promise to them to make them a great nation. It is of course quite a surprise that God is calling for a sword against His own Shepherd, but these are His plans for how He is going to redeem His people from their sin.

יְהוָה מִיָּמֵי = My neighbor, literally “the man of My community”; πολίτην μου = My citizen

Leviticus 18:20 ‘You shall not have intercourse with your neighbor’s wife (יְהוָה מִיָּמֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ לְיָמֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ = to the wife of the man of your community) (καὶ πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου = to the wife of your nearby one), to be defiled with her.’

EBC – Compared to the immediately preceding verses, the oracle now moves back to the time when Israel would be scattered because of her rejection of the true messianic Shepherd. Then, after the announcement of the dispersion, the oracle seems to advance to a future period when Israel will undergo a special, purifying discipline, as silver and gold are refined (vv.8-9). The surviving remnant will be the Lord’s people (v.9).

EBC – Verse 7 begins with an apostrophe to a personified instrument of violent death. According to Bullinger (p. 548), “sword” (*hereb*) is sometimes a metonymy of cause for effect—sword is put for slaughter. Similarly, Edwin Yamauchi (TWOT, 1:320) notes: “In Ps 22:20 [H 21] *hereb* is used as a metaphor for a violent end.” Death is announced against one whom God calls “my shepherd,” i.e., the royal Good Shepherd—the true Shepherd of 11:4-14 in contrast with the foolish and worthless shepherd (11:15-17). God also identifies him as “the man who is close to me,” on which Baldwin (*Zechariah*, pp. 197-98) comments: “The expression ‘who stands next to me’ is used elsewhere only in Leviticus (e.g. 6:2; 18:20) to mean ‘near neighbour’; similarly the

shepherd is one who dwells side by side with the Lord, His equal.” The expression eventually leads to John 10:30: “I and the Father are one,” and to John 14:9: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (cf. John 1:1-2).

EBC – In 11:17 it was the worthless shepherd who was to be struck; now (v.7) it is the Good Shepherd (cf. 12:10). Apparently the one who wields the “sword” is God himself. If so, this is perhaps the best explanation for the shift from the feminine gender of “Awake” (agreeing with “sword,” which is also feminine) to the masculine gender of “Strike” (agreeing with God). In 12:10-14 the Messiah’s death is presented as an act of Israel, but in v.7 it is the sovereign act of God (cf. Isa 53:10; Acts 2:23).

EBC – When the Shepherd is struck, the sheep (cf. 10:3, 9) are scattered, in fulfillment of the curses for covenant disobedience (Deut 28:64; 29:24-25). Keil (KD, *Minor Prophets*, 2:397-98) rightly maintains that the thought is that the Lord “will scatter Israel or His nation by smiting the shepherd; that is to say, He will give it up to the misery and destruction to which a flock without a shepherd is exposed ... The flock, which will be dispersed in consequence of the slaying of the shepherd, is the covenant nation, *i.e.* neither the human race nor the Christian church as such, but the flock which the shepherd in ch. xi 4 sqq. had to feed.” This part of v.7 is quoted by Jesus not long before his arrest (Matt 26:31; Mark 14:27) and applied to the scattering of the apostles (Matt 26:56; Mark 14:50), but they are probably intended to serve as a type of the Diaspora that occurred in A.D. 70 and following. Some take “I will turn my hand against [or ‘on’ or ‘over’]” in a negative sense, others in a positive one. Perowne (p. 140) strikes a balance: “For correction, but in mercy, ver. 8, 9. Comp. Is. i 25.

EBC – “The little ones” are the remnant (vv.8-9), “the oppressed” or “afflicted of the flock” (11:7, 11). Isaiah, too, spoke much of the remnant (e.g., Isa 6:13; 66:22-24).

¹⁵³ But even though many Jews will die because God exercises His judgment on them, a remnant will survive and become the seedbed of the restored kingdom of Israel, the millennial kingdom.

Revelation 9:18 A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.

¹⁵⁴ The remnant who make it through to the end of this age and enter into the millennial kingdom will do so through the trials of enduring the oppression and opposition of the final anti-God government of the Beast of Revelation. And they will finally as an entire group of the nation of Israel call upon God with changed hearts and genuine belief. This will allow God finally to all ALL of them His people.

Genesis 17:8 “I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and **I will be their God.**”

Jeremiah 24:7 ‘I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and **I will be their God**, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.’

Jeremiah 31:33 “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and **I will be their God**, and they shall be My people.”

EBC – These verses apparently precede vv.1-6 chronologically. They depict a refining process for Israel. While what happened in A.D. 70 at the hands of the Romans may have been an initial stage in the progressive fulfillment, the final and complete stage is yet future, for Israel as a whole is not in the proper covenant relationship with God described in v.9. The fact that a remnant will survive (“one-third,” v.8) reveals God’s mercy in the midst of judgment.

EBC – *The Illustrated Family Encyclopedia* (8:97) elucidates the refining process mentioned in the first half of v.9: The process of refining metals, especially precious metals such as silver and gold, serves the prophets of Israel as a metaphor of the nation’s spiritual purification (cf. Isa. 1:25 ...). Thus, in our verse here, the remnant of Israel is compared to the small quantity of pure metal which is left after the smelting and refining: two thirds of the people will be cut off and perish, while the remaining third will be further reduced by being purified in the fire (Zech. 13:8-9). The method of extracting pure gold from the silver and other metals mixed with it by constantly repeated firing was known at an early period in human history perhaps as early as the first half of the second millennium B.C. A Greek author gives a detailed description of the way in which gold was refined in a porous clay vessel. The vessel, containing lead, salt and zinc in addition to the gold ore, was tightly sealed and then placed in a fired kiln for five days. During this time the dross stuck to the sides of the container, while the pure gold collected in its center. From many passages in the Old Testament (e.g. Ezek. 22:21-23; Ps. 12:6) it would seem that this method, or one similar to it, was also the one used in biblical times. The processes of metal-working employed in the classical world are illustrated by a bas-relief decoration on a Greek goblet of the Hellenistic period (4th cent. B.C.)... It shows the bearded smith-god, Hephaestos, seated in a smithy beside a kiln ... and holding in his hand the tools of his craft, a pair of tongs and a hammer.

EBC – The survivors (cf. Jer 30:7) are those of 12:10-13:1; they will constitute the Jewish nucleus of the messianic kingdom and will evidently include the 144,000 of Revelation 7:1-8 and 14:1-5. “The last four lines of the verse have an appropriate chiasmic structure—*they, I, I, they*—reflecting that there are two sides to any relationship, even when it is between God and man” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 198, emphasis hers). The calling on the Lord’s name includes the “supplication” of 12:10. The verse closes with the covenant formula: “I will say, ‘They are my people,’ and they will say, ‘The LORD is our God.’” Thus the new covenant will be fulfilled for Israel, and they will be restored to proper covenant relationship with the Lord (cf. also Ezek 20:30-44, esp. v.37 for their restoration to “the bond of the covenant”).

¹⁵⁵ Chapter 14 is a description of the same events as Revelation 19:1-20:6, God’s and Jesus’ defeat of Israel’s final earthly enemies under the rule of the Beast and the establishment of the millennial kingdom.

Whatever the Gentiles have stolen (time, money, art, energy) from the Jews, God will take this from the Gentiles and give it back to the Jews in the millennial kingdom.

¹⁵⁶ But first the Jews must go through the final judgment of God when it will appear as though Satan and his allies of the Beast and his government have won and are about to annihilate the Jews. God will gather these enemy forces against Israel and Jerusalem for one last and powerful action of His judgment against the Jews for their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, but He

will nevertheless protect and save the 144,000 who will survive this last judgment and enter into the millennial kingdom. Cf. in regard to Babylon and the Persians' destroying the city and the Babylonian Empire around 539 B.C., [Isaiah 13:9](#) Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it. [10](#) For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light... [15](#) Anyone who is found will be thrust through, and anyone who is captured will fall by the sword. [16](#) Their little ones also will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered and their wives ravished. Cf. [Zechariah 12:1](#) The burden of the word of Yahweh concerning Israel. Thus declares Yahweh who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him, [2](#) "Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. [3](#) "It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

Cf. [Revelation 18:21](#) Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. [22](#) "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; [23](#) and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. [24](#) "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth."

EBC – The ultimate goal of all history is the Lord's personal appearance and reign. But before the literal and full manifestation of his kingdom, the earth must experience the throes of birth pangs. There is a return to the refining process of 13:8-9 as the nations gather at Jerusalem and ravish her (14:2). Baldwin (*Zechariah*, p. 199) describes the chiasmic arrangement of the chapter: The dramatic reversal from defeat to victory is well expressed in the chiasmic structure of this section. Verses 1-6 begin with Jerusalem crushed in defeat. 'The day of the Lord ... is darkness, and not light' (Am. 5:18), but, though awesome events continue to overtake the city, there is progression towards one particular day, known to the Lord (verse 7) This is the turning-point. From that day Jerusalem becomes the source of light and life. There the Lord sets up His world government, and whereas at the beginning Jerusalem was being despoiled, at the end all the nations are financing God's kingdom. Whereas at the beginning God's people suffer, at the end His enemies suffer and die. Unite in the Lord is the only unity that endures His kingship is very greatly stressed, hence the fall of those who oppose Him.

EBC – Unger (*Zechariah*, pp. 239-40) stresses the importance of normal, consistent hermeneutics in interpreting chapter 14. The chapter begins with an invasion of Jerusalem similar to that in the opening part of chapter 12. Verse 1 is a general statement; v.2 provides the particulars. Although "a day of the LORD" is not the usual construction for "the day of the LORD," it doubtless means the same thing; "that day" occurs throughout the context (chs. 12-14). Perhaps this particular construction is used here to emphasize the fact that the "day" is distinctively the Lord's. Man is having his day now; the Lord's day is yet to come (see comment at 2:11). "Your" refers to Jerusalem (v.2). Both "your" and "you" are an apostrophe in which Jerusalem is directly addressed.

EBC – "I" (v.2) is a reminder that the sovereign God is in complete control. As the Lord of history and nations, he is the Prime Mover. The scene depicted here (contingents from all nations gathered to fight against Jerusalem) is probably the same as the one in Revelation 16:16-21 (Armageddon). This eschatological verse alone—with its statement that "the city will be captured"—is sufficient to refute the notion popular in certain circles that "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24) were fulfilled as of the rebirth of the modern state of Israel. According to Lucan theology, after "the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled," Jerusalem will be trampled on no more. Since Zechariah 14:2 clearly indicates that Jerusalem will be "trampled on" again in the future, the "times of the Gentiles" would seem to extend to the Messiah's second advent, when those "times" will be replaced by the final, universal, everlasting kingdom of Daniel 2:35, 44-45.

EBC – The rest of v.2 delineates some of the horrors that still await Jerusalem and its people. Chambers (p. 110) correctly observes: "Only a part of the inhabitants are to be driven into exile, the rest remain. It was different at the Chaldean conquest of Jerusalem, for then the greater portion were carried away, and afterwards even 'the remnant that was left' (2 Kings 25:11). The verse cannot therefore refer to that subjugation. Nor can it be applied to the overthrow of the holy city by Titus, who neither had all nations under his banner, nor left a half of the population in possession of their homes." The fulfillment, then, must still lie in the future. At that time all this will happen to fulfill the curses pronounced against covenant disobedience (Deut 28:30).

¹⁵⁷ God through Jesus and his return will fight against Israel's enemies and defeat them. The enemies will be the "nations" who have gathered their armies with Beast of Revelation to destroy the Jews, and it will appear as though they are going to be successful. However, God will intervene at what will look like the last moment, and He will rescue the Jews from annihilation, especially by protecting the 144,000 of Revelation in order to use them as the first generation of Jews in the millennial kingdom.

EBC – Just when it seems that all hope is gone, "then the LORD" himself appears as "divine warrior" and delivers his beleaguered people (on the "divine warrior" motif, see comment at 1:3). But who is this "LORD"? When one compares this scene, including v.4, with Acts 1:9-12 and Revelation 19:11-16, it would appear certain that "the LORD" here is ultimately the Messiah. The passage, then, is indirectly messianic (see comment at 2:10). "The day of battle" is any occasion when the Lord supernaturally intervenes to deliver his people, such as at the Red Sea (Exod 14:13-14). Acts 1:11-12 may well allude to the prophecy that "his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives" (v.4), which is situated "east of Jerusalem."

¹⁵⁸ The "His feet" refers to Yahweh's, but it will be those of the human Jesus at his return.

Will this be a literal splitting of the Mt. of Olives or metaphorical?

[Revelation 16:17](#) Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the

throne, saying, "It is done." **18** And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth [land], so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. **19** The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. **20** And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. **21** And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.

And why will Jesus first touch the earth at his return on the Mt. of Olives instead of somewhere else, e.g., the Temple Mount? EBC – *The Illustrated Family Encyclopedia* (8:98) describes this mountain and its significance: The Day of the Lord, the day when God will take vengeance on the nations that have done harm to Israel, is a conception that first occurs in the utterances of the prophets of the Assyrian and Babylonian periods (Isa. 25:6-9 ...), and is repeated in the visions of their post-destruction counterparts (Ezek 38-39). On this day the Lord of Hosts will appear in His glory on the Mount of Olives, the mountain that rises high above Jerusalem, to war against the nations and mete out retribution to them. At this awe-inspiring theophany, the whole mountain will shake (cf. Judg. 5:4) and be cloven asunder, as the earth was convulsed in the great earthquake that occurred in the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah. The Mount of Olives—referred to by this name only here in the Old Testament (though a similar expression, "the Ascent of Olives", occurs in 2 Sam 15:30)—is, in Ezekiel's words, "the mountain which is on the east side of the city" (Ezek. 11:23). The aura of sanctity which had enveloped it from the early days of Israelite history was in no way diminished in later times. Thus, in the period of the Geonim (8th-11th cent. A.D.), prayers were regularly offered up on the Mount of Olives, which faced the Temple Mount, and the Scrolls of the Law were carried round in circuit there on the festival of Hoshana Rabba, while its slopes were dotted with the tombs of the pious. The mountain rises to a height of 2710 ft. above sea-level, thus being as much as 330 ft. higher than the Temple Mount. Its soil—grey Rendzina—is well suited to the growth of olive trees which thrust their roots down into the brittle rock. Hence, in the Mishna and Talmud it is called the Mount of Anointing.

¹⁵⁹ The *angels* of Yahweh and the resurrected and raptured believers will accompany Jesus to fight with him against Israel's enemies while the 144,000 will flee God's last judgment and the Beast with his armies whom God will destroy. They will use the valley created by the split of the Mt. of Olives as well as other valleys formed by the mountains of Israel to flee the invading armies. And they will escape even supernaturally because God will ensure their protection.

EBC – In the eschaton, when the Lord will stand on this mountain, it will split in two (perhaps due to an earthquake, but not necessarily so), creating a great valley running east and west. Verse 5 states the purpose of the valley—viz., to afford an easy means of rapid escape from the final anti-Semitic onslaught detailed in v.2; the Mount of Olives has always constituted a serious obstacle to such an escape to the east.

EBC – Although some scholars construe the Hebrew for Azel as a preposition ("beside") or a common noun ("side"), it seems best to understand it as the name of a place east of Jerusalem, thus marking the eastern end of the newly formed valley. Some relate it to the Wadi Yasul, a tributary of the Kidron (cf. Azal in ISBE, 1979 rev. ed., 1:374). The future escape of God's people is compared with the time when their ancestors "fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah"—an earthquake so devastating and memorable that it is mentioned also in Amos 1:1. Yohanan Aharoni (*The Land of the Bible*, tr. A.F. Rainey [London: Burns and Oates, 1966], p. 91) even suggests that it may have destroyed level VI at Hazor around 760 B.C. In announcing the Lord's coming, Zechariah expressed his own personal faith in him and relationship to him ("my God"). "All the holy ones" will be in the Lord's retinue when he comes. These apparently include both believers and unfallen angels (see Matt 25:31; Rev 19:14).

¹⁶⁰ An astronomical sign on this last day of the present age when the sun and moon will not give their light. This seems to be a major sign of God's judgment and redemption occurring one right after the other.

See above – **Isaiah 13:9** Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it. **10** For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises and the moon will not shed its light...

Cf. **Joel 2:28/3:1** And it shall come to pass after this, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters will speak on behalf of God. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. **2:29/3:2** And also on your servants and your maidservants, in those days I will pour out My Spirit. **2:30/3:3** And I will give signs in the heavens, and on the land blood, fire, and columns of smoke. **2:31/3:4** The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, in the presence of the coming of the **Day of Yahweh**, the great and fearful One. **2:32/3:5** And it will happen that all who call upon the name of Yahweh will escape to safety, because in the mountain of Zion and Jerusalem there will be someone who escapes to safety, just as Yahweh said, even among the survivors whom Yahweh is calling—

Revelation 6:12 I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood.

EBC – The precise meaning of these verses in Hebrew is admittedly uncertain, but the general picture is clear. The eschatological aspect of the Day of the Lord described here will be characterized by cataclysmic phenomena, including cosmic signs (cf. **Isa 13:9-10; Joel 2:31; 3:15; Amos 5:18; Matt 24:29-30; Rev 6:12-14; 8:8-12; 9:1-18; 14:14-20; 16:4, 8-9**). NIV at the end of v.6 ("no cold or frost") follows the interpretation of the ancient versions. Feinberg (pp. 254-55), however, probably correctly translates the verse this way (and then defends it). "And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light; the bright ones [i.e., luminaries] will be congealed" (v.6). The first portion of the verse has caused no difficulty, and is abundantly set forth in other prophetic passages ... But the last two words have called forth various views and differing interpretations... The difficulties are several: (1) the verb (if we take the *Kethibh*), is masculine while the subject is feminine; (2) the word used for the lights of heaven is found nowhere else in that meaning; (3) if the second word is taken as a noun (so the *Qere*), no such noun is found. It is probably best ... to understand that last clause as a reiteration in figurative language of that which is stated ... in the

EBC – The term “Arabah” (primarily rendered “plain” in KJV) “was applied specifically in part or wholly to the depression of the Jordan Valley, extending from Mt. Hermon, a 9100-ft. (2775-m.) elevation in the Anti-Lebanon Range, due S beyond the Sea of Chinnereth (Galilee), and including both sides of the river Jordan, the Dead Sea, and the region slightly to the southwest as far as the head of the Gulf of Aqabah” (ISBE, 1979 rev. ed., s.v.). That Jerusalem will thus be elevated (probably both physically and in prominence) is in agreement with Isaiah 2:2. The Benjamin Gate, the First Gate, and the Tower of Hananel were all at the northeastern part of the city wall, the Corner Gate was at its northwest corner, and the royal wine-presses were just south of the city (cf. Jer 31:38). “Thus the naming of landmarks on the east, west, north and south walls emphasizes that the whole city is included” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 204).

¹⁶⁴ Thus, people will dwell in security and safety in Jerusalem (“it”) (both feminine in the LXX) and, by extrapolation, in the rest of the land of Israel which God promised to Abraham.

לֹא יִהְיֶה עוֹרֵר וְיִהְיֶה עָרִיב = a curse/destruction, i.e., people and things be dedicated to destruction, will no longer be; καὶ οὐκ ἔσται ἀνάθεμα ἔτι

EBC – Furthermore, the city will be densely populated (“inhabited,” v.11; cf. 2:4), never again to be depopulated through destruction (as at the time of the exile to Babylonia—Isa 43:28). “In Zec. 14:11; Mal. 4:6 curse (Heb. *herem*, RSV mg. ‘ban of utter destruction’) refers to a ban which was sometimes placed on a captured city, which meant that everything in the city was consecrated to the deity and offered as a holocaust (cf. Josh. 6:17-19, 24)” (see “curse” in ISBE, 1979 rev. ed., 1:837). (For further study of the Hebrew word translated “destroyed” [*herem*], see TWOT, 1:324-25.) Finally, Jerusalem will be secure (see Jer 31:40).

¹⁶⁵ Death for the armies of the Beast of Revelation who are invading Israel and attacking Jerusalem to destroy the Jews completely will not be a pretty picture. God will punish these soldiers who have chosen to seek to annihilate His people, the Jews, with not only death itself but also the manner in which they will die.

You never want to attack Jerusalem. It is the same as attacking God and will result in nothing less than your own destruction, even eternal destruction.

¹⁶⁶ God will terrify these armies so much that they will even fight one another, perhaps to try to get out of the way of God’s attacking them.

¹⁶⁷ God has already mentioned that the remaining loyal Jews in Judah and Jerusalem will participate in fighting and destroyed these invading armies (cf. Zechariah 10:5-7; 12:6-9). The result of their victory will be that the Gentiles’ wealth somehow will be gathered into Jerusalem—either voluntarily as the nations respond to Jesus’ rule, or involuntarily as the Jews’ acquire the wealth of the conquered Gentiles.

¹⁶⁸ Even the animals of the Gentile armies will be affected by God’s supernatural attack on them. This is like the *herem* by the invading Israelites commanded by God in Joshua 6:17.

Joshua 6:17 “The city shall be under the ban (וְהָיְתָה הָעִיר תְּרֵמָה דְּיָהוָה) (καὶ ἔσται ἡ πόλις ἀνάθεμα), it and all that is in it belongs to the LORD; only Rahab the harlot and all who are with her in the house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent.”

Joshua 6:21 They utterly destroyed everything in the city (וְהָיְתָה כָּל-אֲשֶׁר בְּעִיר) (καὶ ἀνεθεμάτισεν αὐτήν Ἰησοῦς καὶ ὅσα ἦν ἐν τῇ πόλει), both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

Galatians 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed (ἀνάθεμα ἔστω).

EBC – The prophet next revealed how God will deal with the antikingdom forces of vv.1-3: First, he will strike them with a “plague” (v.12), just as he did the Assyrian army of King Sennacherib in 701 B.C. (Isa 37:36). Second, the Lord will strike the enemies of himself and his people with “great panic” (v.13), causing them to “attack each other” (cf. Judg 7:22; 1 Sam 14:15-20; 2 Chronicles 20:23). Third, the rest of the people of Judah will rally to defend the capital (v.14; cf. 12:2). The validity of this last point rests on the NIV rendering at Jerusalem, not “against Jerusalem” (RSV). Verse 14 ends with the Jews gathering the plunder, or spoils, of battle—a reversal of v.1. Verse 15 adds that a plague similar to that of vv.12-13 will strike the beasts of burden, thus preventing their use for escape.

¹⁶⁹ God will require of the remaining peoples of the nations of the earth that they demonstrate their willingness to submit to His and Jesus’ rule by some of them joining the Jews in celebrating the Feast of Booths annually in Jerusalem. Just as God saved the Israelites from death in Egypt and they lived in temporary dwellings in the Sinai desert, God will require the Gentiles to acknowledge His ongoing but temporary provision for them during the remaining portion of their lives on earth—that will result in either their eternal salvation or their eternal destruction, depending on the condition of their hearts.

EBC – In spite of the awful decimation predicted in vv.12-15, there will be “survivors”—a converted remnant from those nations—who will make an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem “to worship the King” (see Isa 2:2-4; also Ezek 40-48 for more on the nature of that worship). Two other passages also combine “the King” with “the LORD Almighty” (Ps 24:10; Isa 6:5). The Feast of Tabernacles marked the final harvest of the year’s crops (Lev 23:34-43). Perowne (p. 147) suggests that, of the three great pilgrimage festivals (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles), the reason Tabernacles (or Booths) will be selected as the festival for representatives of the various Gentile nations is that “it was the last and greatest festival of the Jewish year, gathering up into itself, as it were, the year’s worship.”

EBC – The Feast of Tabernacles was to be a time of grateful rejoicing (Lev 23:40, Deut 16:14-15; Neh 8:17). The people were to live in “booths” as a reminder that their ancestors lived in booths when the Lord brought them out of Egypt (Lev 23:42-43). Beginning with the period of Ezra and Nehemiah, the reading (and perhaps teaching) of “the Book of the Law of God” became an integral part of the festivities (Neh 8:18; cf. Isa 2:3). The festival seems to speak of the final, joyful regathering and restoration of Israel in full kingdom blessing, as well as of the ingathering of the nations. It may continue to have some significance (at least

typically) in the eternal state (in the New Jerusalem on the new earth), since God will “tabernacle” (NIV, “live”) with his people (Rev 21:3). Josephus (Jos. Antiq. VIII, 100 [iv.1]) says that Tabernacles was “especially sacred and important.” For a more complete study of this festival, see de Vaux (*Ancient Israel*, pp. 495–502), who maintains (p. 506) that “the entire passage is devoted to the eschatological triumph, to that ‘Day’ when Yahweh will be king over the whole earth (v.9), and the feast of Tents is mentioned only because it was the main feast for pilgrimage to Jerusalem.”

¹⁷⁰ If there is any nation that does not have at least some representatives in Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths, then that nation will find itself short on food and provisions. In other words, attending the annual Feast of Booths will be a condition that God will place on all Gentile nations for the sustaining of their physical lives. How creative.

¹⁷¹ Egypt as the “nation” that once enslaved the Jews, God’s people, is mentioned as an example of all other nations. If God is willing to provide for the Egyptians after their gross mistreatment of the Jews in Moses’ day, then He is gracious enough to provide for all Gentile nations—on the condition that representatives from each of them attend the Feast of Booths.

¹⁷² EBC – The prophet next unfolds what will happen to the recalcitrant nations that refuse to send delegations on this annual pilgrimage to worship the King in Jerusalem: The blessing of rain will be withheld from them (v.17; according to Deut 28:22-24, this was one of the curses for covenant disobedience). Baldwin (*Zechariah*, p. 206) relates v.17 to 9:11-10:1, “where an adequate rainfall is connected with the prosperity of the Messianic era.” Unger (*Zechariah*, p. 268) observes: “In Ezekiel 34:26 the word [‘rain’] is used figuratively of spiritual blessing, and Zechariah’s usage, while literal, does not exclude the spiritual connotation.” This principle is illustrated in v.18 with Egypt, but the Hebrew text may be read in different ways, as indicated by the NIV margin.

EBC – Ellis (p. 1050) suggests that “perhaps the Heb. is a rhetorical question: ‘shall not the plague come upon them?’” Accepting the reading in the NIV margin, Baldwin (*Zechariah*, p. 207) points out that “Egypt was an exception among the nations because it depended for water not on rainfall but on the Nile. As Egypt had experienced plagues at the time of the Exodus, and through them had been brought to acknowledge God’s sovereignty, so *plague* was a fitting symbol of disaster in the new era” (emphasis hers). Ultimately this, too, may include the withholding of rain, for drought would cause the Nile inundation to fail. Thus will all be punished who do not make the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem to worship the King and to observe the thankful expressions associated with the Feast of Tabernacles (v.19), and thus will the King be universally worshiped.

¹⁷³ Mundane instruments for living life, i.e., horses, cooking pots, etc. will all be seen as something that people use to acknowledge and worship God with every action. In Israel they will all do everything to the honor and glory of God, because the Jews will finally be a nation of all authentic believers with changed and circumcised hearts.

Exodus 28:36 “You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, ‘Holy to the LORD.’”

EBC – “*Holy to the Lord* was engraved on the plate of gold worn on the turban of the high priest (Ex. 28:36) as an expression and reminder of his consecration, but it was meant to be true of all Israel (Ex. 19:6; Je. 2:3)” (Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 207). So God’s original purpose for Israel (Exod 19:6) will be fulfilled.

¹⁷⁴ “Canaanite” here means unbeliever. No Jew and also no Gentile who comes to Jerusalem during the millennial and messianic will be an un believer. They will all be people of changed heart who acknowledge God for who He is. This is also to say, then, that the representatives from the Gentile nations who attend the Feast of Booths annually will be authentic believers and therefore genuinely desirous of fulfilling God’s condition so that He will provide physical sustenance for their entire nation.

EBC – Here the nature of the messianic kingdom is depicted: It will be characterized by “holiness” (for the meaning of this word, see comment at 2:12). Perowne (p. 148) gives an overview of these verses: “The ornaments of worldly pomp and warlike power shall be as truly consecrated as the very mitre of the High Priest, and every vessel used in the meanest service of the Temple as holy as the vessels of the altar itself, ver. 20. Nay every common vessel throughout the city and the whole land shall be so holy as to meet for the service of the sanctuary, and every profane person shall be for ever banished from the house of the Lord, ver. 21.” He adds (p. 149): “All distinction between sacred and secular shall be at an end, because all shall now be alike holy.” The teaching of these verses may be summed up like this: There will be holiness in public life (“the bells of the horses,” v.20), in religious life (“the cooking pots in the LORD’S house,” v.20), and in private life (“every pot in Jerusalem and Judah,” v.21). Even common things become holy when they are used for God’s service. So it is with our lives.

EBC – The final scene of the Book of Zechariah anticipates Revelation 11:15, toward which all history is steadily moving—“the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever”—and Revelation 19:16 “On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”